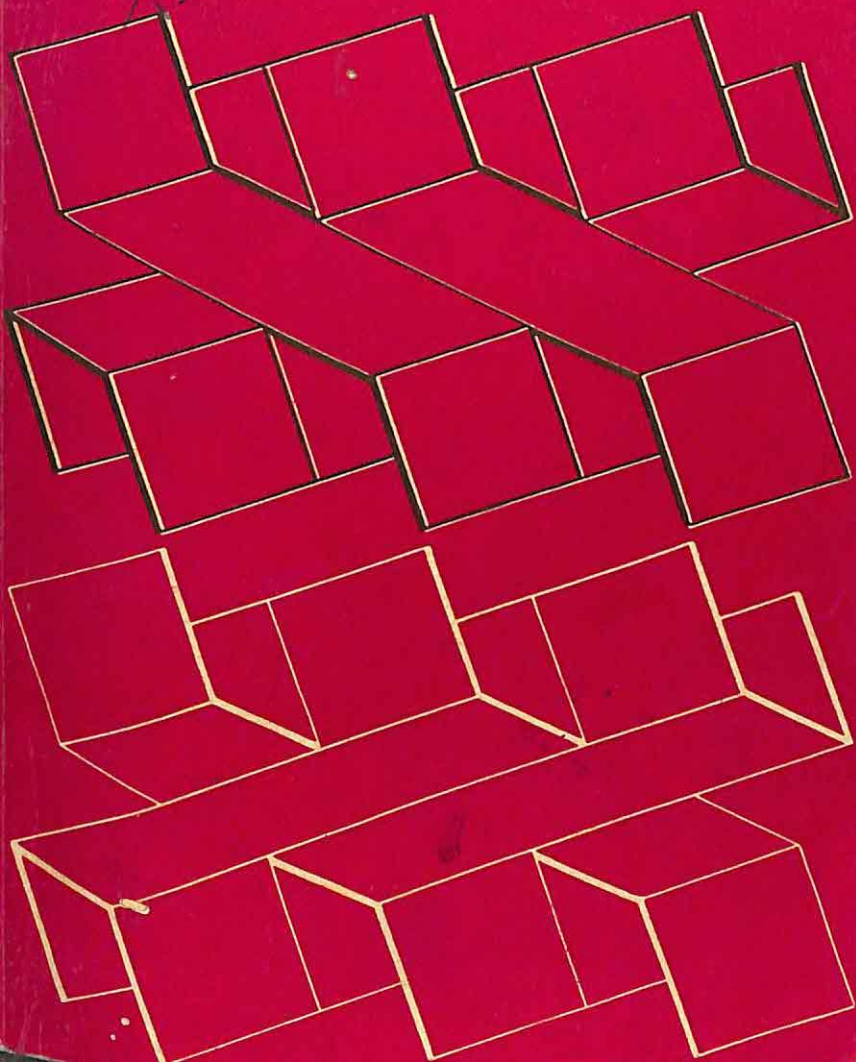


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# Penguin Survey of the Social Sciences 1965





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Penguin Survey of the Social Sciences 1965







# Penguin Survey of the Social Sciences 1965

EDITED BY JULIUS GOULD

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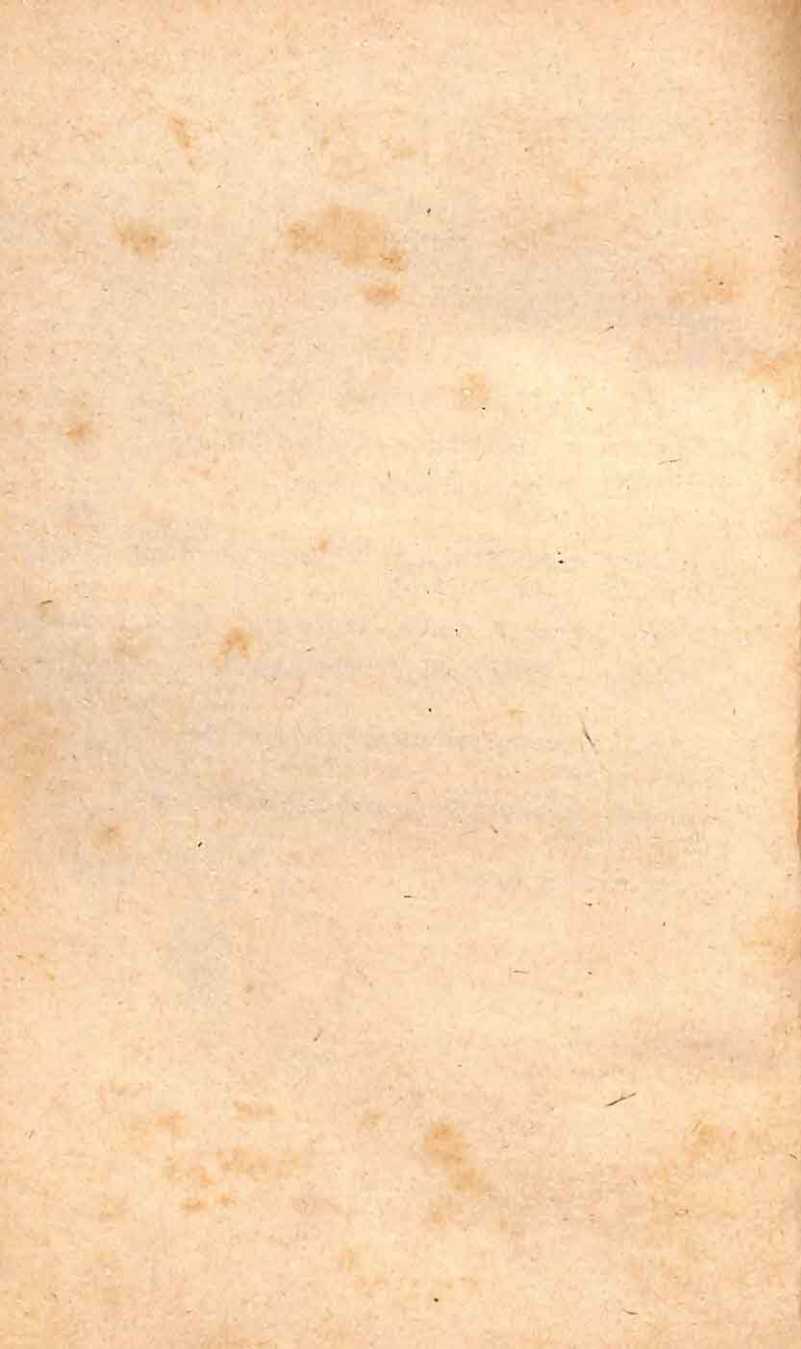
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## Editor's Foreword

This is the first of the Penguin social science surveys. It is not – and could not be – an exhaustive survey of all the work currently under way in the social sciences. Rather it is an attempt to shed light – especially for a non-professional circle of readers – upon some of the issues with which many social scientists, both here and overseas, are now concerned. I have also attempted to avoid – for this first survey – purely local and parochial material and to give some emphasis to aspects of the social sciences that are fundamental and transcend purely British experience. Thus Daniel Bell's essay on prediction covers a wide ground – both in the field of methodology and substantive work; Lucy Mair, Leonard Reissman, and Martin Dewhirst have offered, from very different perspectives, an assessment of socio-political processes in 'emergent' and 'advanced' states; Robin Fox has wedded an argument about the social anthropological use of kinship terms into a wider discussion of British kinship studies; David Martin and Basil Bernstein have written on fundamental problems in the sociology of religion and language; and Hanan Selvin has written on American experience and future developments in the all-important area of professional training.

We are grateful for permission to include Daniel Bell's article, which appeared in an earlier form in *Daedalus*, summer 1964.

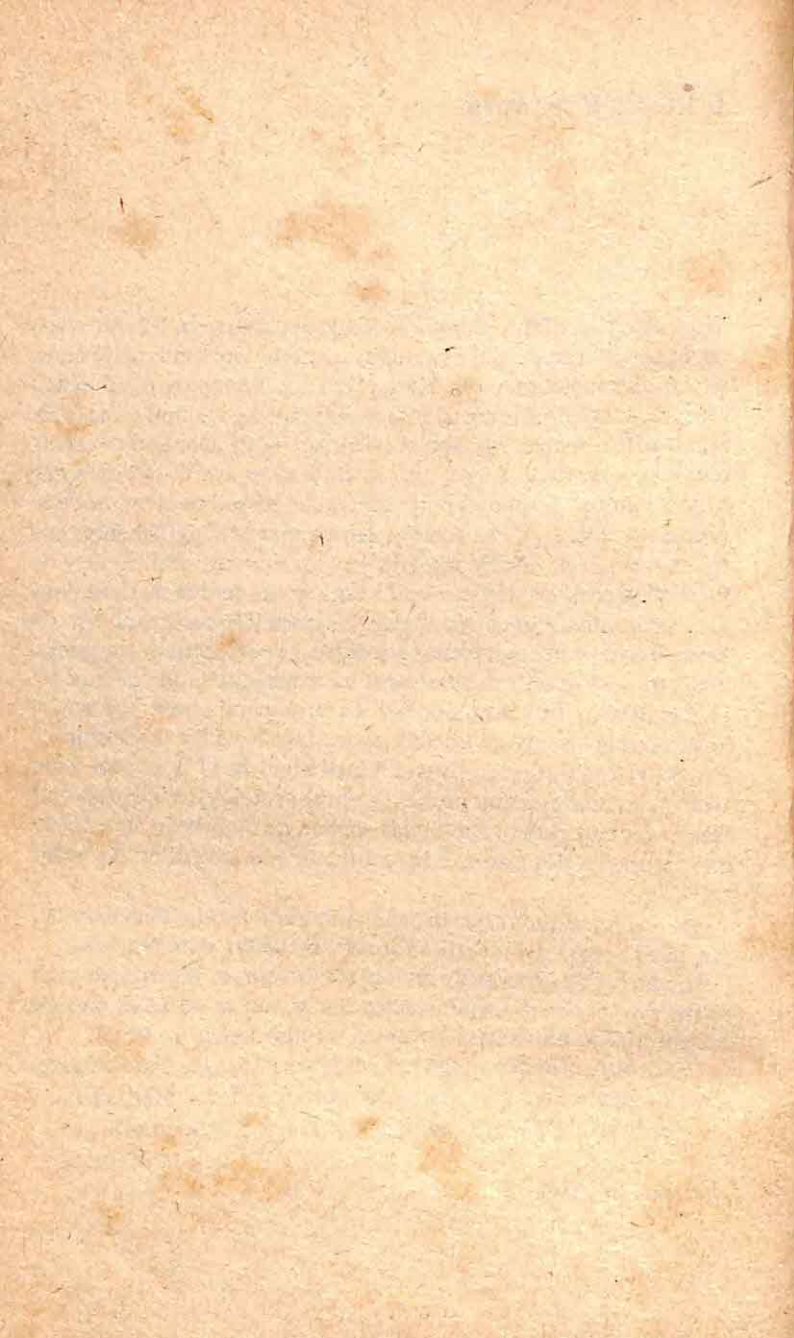
Hanan Selvin generously revised for this survey his contribution to the *International Social Science Journal*, autumn 1963, and we are grateful to him and to UNESCO for permission to use it.

Thanks are also due to the British Association for the Advancement of Science for permission to reproduce Lucy Mair's paper; it is published in *The Advancement of Science*, volume XXI.

JULIUS GOULD

Nottingham, 1965





## In Defence of Sociology

*Julius Gould*

Sociology, it may be said, needs no defenders. Its enemies, once legion and venomous, are now dispersed. At least they are silent. We are all sociologists now: and the professional sociologist can bask in the sunshine of intellectual fashion. Thousands of students apply each year at universities and other institutions for admission to courses in sociology – and the demand curve is rising. The number of those teaching the subject in Britain is also expanding rapidly; considerable sums of money are being expended on social research, and the just claim is made that far more is needed. The reasons for the subject's popularity are quite complex. The pressure, very interestingly, has come from two directions.

Firstly, there is the demand of the young – the aspiring, socially curious novice who seeks a higher education from sociology. The motives are no doubt mixed. When questioned, the would-be student replies – to the mirth of the interrogator – that he or, more often, she 'wants to work with people' or 'wants to help people'. These replies are, of course, a standard patter. Yet those who give them reveal, in many cases, a genuine concern with the human condition. And often, too, they reflect a pervasive distaste for any career that might involve them directly with the 'hard labour' of an industrial society – applied science, engineering, and the like. Whether this distaste is socially advantageous is, of course, far from clear. It is obvious, too, that in many cases the desirable careers centred on 'work with people' do not include schoolteaching: ordinary children, it seems, are not deemed 'people' in this sense. . . . The taste for sociology is also whetted by the apparent youth of the subject. Until very recently, it has not been studied in schools as an 'A' level subject: it therefore has the novelty which other subjects (often badly taught at school) understandably lack.

Secondly, there are very powerful pressures towards sociology



from the adult society and its spokesmen. The modernization of Britain, so long overdue, will take many forms. But it will rest on the deployment and application of knowledge – involving new techniques of handling men as well as things, new ways of gathering, storing, and using ‘information’. If society is to be ‘science based’, then, in part, it will be ‘social science based’ as well. No doubt this programme is underpinned by a fearsome ideology of science; no doubt, too, for some of its advocates it is a dream of technocratic, manipulative control. For all that, the programme, in practice, is both sensible and timely: over the last five years it has gained influential support. Administration, both public and private, will come to depend more on specialist research – less on inspired hunches or guesswork. The advanced sectors of the economy, moreover, have long known the uses of market research as a guide to production planning. From all these sources comes a steady demand for skilled personnel with a social-science training.

Below the bright surface there remains some unease about the future of sociology. The very process of its growth – about which I shall say a little below – gives some ground for concern. It has been too sudden, rapid, and unplanned for one to feel entirely sanguine. But I am less concerned here with these matters of professional structure – important though they are – than with certain intellectual deformations. With some of these deformations other writers have lately been concerned. In the main I share their standpoint, but do not feel it needs more than a mention here. Donald MacRae, for example, has called for an end to the messianic hankerings to which many British sociologists are addicted.<sup>1</sup> Charles Madge has warned against the narrow moralism of much contemporary work – and urged us to pay greater attention to questions of taste and aesthetics.<sup>2</sup> These are words from the wise that may go unheard. For, flushed with our sudden popularity, we may regard these and other critiques as ‘revisionist’ heresy bound to tarnish our image. . . . In the last resort the critics may be accused of not ‘believing’ in sociology – or in its progress. Let me face these points. Firstly, sociology is not a creed: its deformations, as they arise, are a subject for free debate. Secondly, I *do* believe that sociology has a future in Britain – and for one good reason. Until very recently entry into sociology here has been through only a few

gates. Over the years the public esteem of the subject has not been high and the openings for sociology graduates have been few. Now things have changed. Not only have Oxford and Cambridge given the subject hospitality, but many of the new universities have given it a central place. In the short run this has meant a dispersal of scarce human resources – but in the longer run it should lead to academic pluralism and scientific diversity.\* Likewise, as the subject gains in esteem and effectiveness, it should be enlivened by an influx of clever young people who seek both a liberal, modern education and a marketable skill. There is much, therefore, on the credit side. And this is a good time to ensure that 'more' sociology may not mean 'worse' but something distinctly 'better' than before.

Utilitarianism remains the tacit ideology of the Englishman: and, naturally enough, this governs and limits British sociology. There is today an immense and fruitful concern with problems of British society. The mission of Booth, the Webbs, and Rowntree, much refined and widened, is not likely to disappear. Many new topics – hitherto ignored or neglected – are now being explored. Into the study of mass culture or education or sexual behaviour a good deal of effort (and money) is now directed. What this will mean for sociology and related social sciences is quite unclear. It is also unclear what its impact will be upon the society it studies. On the one hand the new British sport of introspection may already be paying off. Social sympathies, it often seems, are being widened: our attitudes towards 'deviant' groups, for example, are less rigid, more humane than they were. On the other hand sociology could become an ideology for Little England, sanctioning through 'science' a pious, introverted parochialism. The outcome, in this regard, is really quite open. Either way sociology *of a sort* will have benefited. For the inquiries now under way or projected will bring on a new generation of researchers. And, if the inquiries are imaginatively conceived, new techniques and perspectives may be promoted. Already a good deal of effort, very rightly, goes into the study and refinement of research methods, especially those con-

\* Sometimes of course one wonders. Our country is so small and its *élites* so interwoven that the pattern of advance in sociology may be set by a few determined people. This is not, however, fore-ordained.



cerned with large scale survey analysis. One can, as I do, welcome all this and yet feel, as Karl Mannheim did thirty years ago, that sociology may disintegrate 'into a series of discrete technical problems of social readjustment'.<sup>3</sup> There are many who, if pressed, would find this quite an agreeable outcome: even dress it up in 'radical cloth'. Sometimes, they get unintended backing from those who on other grounds report that 'there is . . . a strong case for abandoning altogether the use of "Sociology" as an unqualified term and referring always to industrial sociology, or the sociology of law or religion, or whatever it might be'.<sup>4</sup> To save sociology from this fate, it is often proposed that it should ally itself very closely with historical studies. Professor E. H. Carr, for example, points out that for a sociologist to restrict himself

to so-called 'technical' problems of enumeration and analysis is merely to become an unqualified apologist for a static society. . . . \* I would only say that the more sociological history becomes and the more historical sociology becomes, the better for both. Let the frontier between them be wide open for two-way traffic.<sup>5</sup>

Much the same hope is proffered by Asa Briggs,<sup>6</sup> who also invokes (following C. Wright Mills) 'the principle of historic specificity':

All social phenomena are 'placed' in time and must be located in a time scale. . . . The image of any society . . . is a historically specific conception. However 'period' may be defined – and historians have had great difficulty in defining it once they have tried to treat it as something more than a unit of convenience – the institutions, the ideologies, and the 'types' of men and women to be found in any society constitute something of a unique pattern.

These and other historians are well disposed to sociology. Above all else they welcome its generalizing impulse and its 'wide open frontier' with social history. Their welcome is a generous one: the frontier marks, the labels matter less than is supposed and very often they reflect an older academic convention. But I do not think

\* Since Carr wrote these words the 'enumerator' among sociologists has come to enjoy a heightened *mana*. At a time of increased social uncertainty public bodies have taken anxious refuge in statistics. They believe, pardonably but incorrectly, that statistics alone can form a solid bedrock for policy.



that the labels, as yet, are quite outworn. They still mean something at the crucial levels of education and training. Intimate as is the link between sociology and history, the perspectives of the two disciplines are not totally aligned. And even if they were, it would still be difficult to teach a student *simultaneously* how to be both a historian and sociologist. Whatever kind of partners sociology may have (and these could usefully include philosophy or political science no less than history) it can and should retain its autonomy. That autonomy comes from what are in Britain very much neglected – the analytic tools, the language, the gambits of sociological discourse. I am arguing that – for all their imperfections, their American ambience,\* and so on – these tools deserve more prominent attention. There is a common language of sociology, a verbal matrix within which problems of importance have been examined. This is the language, for example, of ‘structure’, ‘function’, ‘system’, and ‘values’ – in terms of which much sociological theory (good and bad) is at present conducted. The modern sociologist has to learn this language: not for its own sake but for the uses to which it is put. Elsewhere in this book (p. 81), Hanan Selvin argues that statistical or mathematical illiteracy should be reduced. So too should conceptual indifference: and for very similar reasons.

European reactions to American sociology are really a fascinating story. For decades we smiled at Americans for pursuing a random empiricism – ignoring the valuable non-random work that was being done. When American empiricism became organized and bureaucratized we were quick to find fault with that. When American scholars, swallowing a heady draught of German ideas, turned to concept-formation and theoretical ‘systems’, they were rebuked for insensitivity to ‘facts’. Clearly they cannot win. . . . Of course the flaws in the conceptual crystal are easy to detect. Some concepts simply re-describe, in a circuitous language, fairly familiar ideas. Some of the ‘theories’ are not theories. They neither are, nor yield, propositions which, at any level of generality, can be verified or falsified. British critics pride themselves upon their superior philosophical skill. They see, for example, the flaws

\* The basic vocabulary (neologisms apart) was all imported to America from Europe.

in 'functional analysis' (both in its cruder and more refined forms) or in 'role theory'. They detect ambiguities in the notions of 'system' and 'equilibrium' and they are very suspicious of the notions of 'value' and 'value system' which are so central to a good deal of American sociology. Many who are sceptical about all else are confident that not only is there no 'general theory' in sociology, but also that none is likely to emerge. When we do not convict the Americans of tautology we upbraid them for determinism – sometimes for using some brand of determinism in order to celebrate the American *status quo*. Some of these criticisms are more pertinent than others. Many American writers, for example, would *agreed* that what is often called 'general theory' amounts in fact not to 'theory' in an accepted sense but to a set of basic sociological postulates. The concepts in which these postulates are couched should not, of course, be taken as a 'final' immutable structure. Obviously they are open to change and revision. All the same the sociologist is committed to the need for such postulates and for their codification. Some – though not all – of the current sociological abstractions are now, I would argue, a *common* deposit – a precipitate of a good deal of careful thought that we have no business to ignore. In making our high-minded philosophical\* criticisms we run the risk of losing the baby with the bath-water.† A good example of the uses – in an unusual context – of this common deposit may be seen in the essay in this book by Basil Bernstein (pp. 157–8). One of the many merits of his work is the use he makes of 'universalistic' and 'particularistic' criteria. From another angle Lucy Mair takes up the problem of 'determinism' as it relates to the concept of role – and she shows, I think convincingly, that to use the concept, far from 'determining' the

\* And, I fear, sometimes ideological as well.

† It is not just foreign conceptual babies that are treated thus. One of the few new 'technical terms' introduced by a British sociologist came – rather surprisingly – from Professor Morris Ginsberg. Writing in 1934, he introduced the category of 'quasi-groups' to which belong 'such entities as social classes, which without being groups are a recruiting field for groups whose members have certain characteristic modes of behaviour in common'. (*Sociology*, Home University Library, p. 40.) Had Ginsberg been an American there would have been, by now, a whole corpus of literature devoted to this concept and its use in empirical research. . . .



subject matter, gives it, in her own phrase, 'room for manoeuvre' (p. 23).

Let me put forward one other instance of misunderstanding about concepts. The idea of 'value' is, as I have mentioned, much used in theoretical work. There are many traditions in the use of the word – but the dominant one today stems from the difficult work of Talcott Parsons and his colleagues. They do not in fact invest it with any special mystery. Neil Smelser, for example, a prominent Parsonian, defines values as 'the generalized ends . . . which provide the broadest guides to purposive social behaviour'.<sup>7</sup> This may be vague but it is not arcane. That there are such generalized ends, it is hard to deny: although what those ends are, how homogeneous they are, and how widely accepted, are matters for empirical research. To what use is the concern with 'values' put? Clearly the aim is to trace the effect on social structure of the predominance of one or more 'generalized ends' – once these have been identified. This is far from easy. The motivations and interests of quite small groups are hard to disentangle: when we examine the 'values' of a modern nation state we are faced with even greater difficulties. It is never easy to accept statements such as this:

In a stable society, however, the ultimate values do not change. It is the means of carrying out these values that alter with the alteration of the conditions of life. The American value system has remained relatively constant while the country has become urbanized and industrialized.<sup>8</sup>

Yet despite their changeless air such statements are far from empty. They would gain if linked with one very striking feature of value analysis. Many of the categories that 'describe' values come in pairs. To take one example: there is the distinction between 'universalism' and 'particularism' so often encountered. Following the former, for instance, we treat people according to the *same* criteria: thus equality before the law brings this 'value' into social life. Following the latter, we treat other people on *varying* criteria – arbitrary or not – depending, for example, on the group or social class they belong to. Now no society – large or small – is totally governed by *one* of these (or other) 'paired' values to the exclusion of the *other*. There is a 'mix' – and the nature of the

mix needs investigation. What is more, the 'quality' of a social structure, its chances for change and growth, are not 'determined' solely by considerations of value. Again Talcott Parsons writes clearly enough on this basic matter.

It should be clear that using values as the initial point of reference for the structural analysis of social systems does not imply that they are the sole or even the most important determinants of particular structures and processes in such systems . . . Beliefs and values are actualized, partially and imperfectly, in realistic situations of social interaction, and the outcomes are always co-determined by the values and the realistic exigencies, conversely . . . 'interests' are by no means independent of the values which have been institutionalized in the relevant groups.<sup>9</sup>

Recently S. M. Lipset, the political sociologist, made a detailed attempt – one of the most impressive of its kind – to marry this theoretical approach to the study of advanced societies. *The First New Nation*<sup>10</sup> is largely about the U.S.A., but Lipset points up the differences between the key 'values' of American, British, French, and other European societies. To the American values of 'equality' and 'achievement' he counterposes the British values of 'deference' and 'equality'. He seeks to show how the American attachment to the 'generalized ends' of equality has helped, over the last 150 years, to legitimize American institutions and to make viable the American form of stable democratic politics. His concern with value-systems also leads him to find evidence for the *relative* continuity which the American values he isolates seem to exhibit. His argument is subtle and richly documented – and I shall not attempt to summarize it further. I cite Lipset's line of argument because it has occasioned a fair amount of hasty criticism. The objections have been partly scientific, partly ideological. Lipset has been 'understood' to argue that 'a nation's political history merely reflects its system of values': that 'a nation's values do not change', that American democracy is flawless: that 'the United States . . . became a stable democracy because American "values" were such as to promote a stable democracy'.<sup>11</sup> The scientific criticism in all this is that value analysis is both tautologous and determinist – a line of criticism which I have previously cited. I do not think that Lipset's approach can fairly be regarded as a monistic determinism, as suggesting that 'this is the best of all possible



worlds'. Lipset, if I may offer a tautology of my own, is not Michael Oakeshott. Indeed he recognizes that the 'system' will not always evolve in a direction that satisfies its key 'values' – and that to reach some important goal will require a good deal of conscious political intervention. In other words black Americans will not, through any 'hidden-hand' process, *automatically* become equal to white Americans. Nor does Lipset believe that a nation's values are 'constant'. He is saying nothing so trivial. He is arguing that, despite all the changes that have taken place in American society, there has been an unusual, indeed remarkable, measure of continuity, and that the processes whereby a society's value-system changes are complex and require study. What is more, they can only be studied by cross-cultural comparisons equally informed by historical knowledge. One of the sources of progress in sociology today is that the range of such cross-cultural comparisons has been greatly widened. We have benefited from the general concern – inspired by guilt or fear – with the 'underdeveloped' countries. In the study of such countries – as Leonard Reissman's essay on urbanism shows – our most general concepts are tested and refreshed. Some – especially those that are genuinely 'ethnocentric' – may perish on the journey.

I would like to end on a more immediate note. After all, concepts are for the few – but experience is for the many. The promise of sociology is not, as is sometimes said, that it is the '*conscience*' of industrial society. Its promise is that it can deepen our experience – of ourselves and others, of our own society and other societies; that it raises, as Daniel Bell's essay (pp. 116–18) reminds us, 'alternative futures'. In a striking passage Edward Shils has claimed that:

The proper calling of sociology today is the illumination of opinion. Having its point of departure in the opinion of the human beings who make up the society, it is its task to return to opinion, clarified and deepened by dispassionate study and systematic reflection.<sup>12</sup>

He offers the tempered hope that the social scientist *can* work with policy makers – without despising them or cringing before them. But what sociologists can bring to the service of policy or of public opinion depends upon the richness of their own 'experience'. This experience comes in at least two stages. In their own training they



must become professionals without becoming philistines; they cannot dispense with a liberal education. The content of a liberal education may be changing, but the aim – that of ‘freeing’ men from malice and partiality – remains. It follows that in the education of sociologists there is no place for the more philistine and hate-laden ideologies. The second stage comes when the social scientist, now formally trained, is ‘on the job’. Now he will have a chance to acquire and transmit new experiences. If he hides behind concepts or computers, if he does his work at second hand – relying solely on secondary sources (such as books) or secondary instruments (such as interviewers) he is that much removed from his raw material.

I have spoken, almost throughout, as if sociologists were a uniform species. In reality they differ in their interests as in their talents. This is very obvious in the U.S.A. where, within a common professional *milieu*, a remarkable diversity now exists. Debate goes on about the fundamental aspects of the subject.<sup>13</sup> Recently George C. Homans has renewed the assault on ‘functional theory’ as distinct from ‘functional analysis’. ‘Functional propositions,’ he claims, ‘have not been shown to be true and general.’ More arguable is his positive point that ‘the general explanatory principles even of sociology are not sociological . . . but psychological, about the behavior of men, not about the behavior of societies’.<sup>14</sup> The title of Homans’s paper is ‘Bringing Men Back In’ – and it will have a resonance beyond the limits of his technical argument. For all social scientists live with a common challenge – that of responsibility to their fellow-men. This does not entail a lavish benevolence – nor a drive to follow where mass opinion (or mass culture) leads. It does demand from the sociologist a constant renewal of his own social experience. In an age of growing professionalism, we may feel oppressed by this demand – a demand for diversity at a time of specialization. If we succeed in meeting it, the promise of sociology may in our generation be transformed into achievement.

NOTES

1. Donald G. MacRae, ‘The Crisis of Sociology’, in J. H. Plumb (ed.), *Crisis in the Humanities*, Penguin Books, 1964.

2. Charles Madge, *Society in the Mind*, Faber, 1963.
3. K. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, Kegan Paul, 1936, p. 228.
4. W. G. Runciman, *Social Science and Political Theory*, Cambridge University Press, 1963, p. 4.
5. E. H. Carr, *What is History?*, Macmillan, 1961, p. 60.
6. Asa Briggs, 'Sociology and History', in A. T. Welford, *et al.* (eds.), *Society: Problems and Methods of Study*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962, p. 95.
7. N. Smelser, *The Theory of Collective Behavior*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962, p. 24.
8. K. Davis, H. Bredemeier, and M. J. Levy, *Modern American Society*, Rinehart, 1949, p. 713.
9. T. Parsons, *Structure and Process in Modern Societies*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1960, p. 173.
10. Heinemann, 1964.
11. See the lengthy discussion of *The First New Nation* by David Marquand in *Encounter*, August 1964.
12. E. Shils, 'The Calling of Sociology', in T. Parsons *et al.* (eds.), *Theories of Society*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1961, vol. II, p. 1441.
13. Some of the most acute attacks on 'orthodoxy' overstate a useful case. This was notably true of C. Wright Mills's *The Sociological Imagination* (Oxford, 1959). His concern for 'historical specificity' left unsolved the problems of the comparative sociologist. His zeal for the 'big' social questions underplayed the scientific relevance of issues that seem, relatively, 'small' ones. I agree with the view of another radical critic of contemporary sociology, Lewis Coser: 'A new discipline requires for its growth the utmost openness, the maximum freedom for its practitioners to strike out in the most varied directions. . . . Mills, however, attempts to impose on sociology a kind of premature closure where the fruitful is sifted from the fruitless in advance.' (*Partisan Review*, vol. XXVII, p. 171.)
14. George C. Homans, 'Bringing Men Back In', *American Sociological Review*, XXIX, 1964, p. 815.



# How Small-scale Societies Change\*

*Lucy Mair*

I originally intended to entitle this paper 'Room for Manoeuvre', but then I was afraid that might be too cryptic. All the same, the phrase does indicate my theme. I want to suggest by it the way a social anthropologist looks at the changes taking place in those parts of the world that have only recently become interested in the application of science to the control of their environment, in large-scale production and trade, and in the development of industry and mechanical transport.

Some people think of social change as a phenomenon in itself, to be studied separately from the analysis of social relationships that is our main job. Some people talk about 'explanation of social change' as if it were something surprising that had to be accounted for; as if one expected societies to stay permanently the same and was surprised when they didn't. Some people think that to have experienced little social change is to have had no history. This attitude is very widespread in Africa, where people are coming to resent very much the idea that nothing of any importance happened to them before their continent was invaded by strangers from the east and north. They resent the idea that nothing can have happened because there are no written records of what happened. But the fact is that many countries which have historical records going back for millennia can also be thought of as having experienced little change during most of that time in comparison with what they have gone through in the last two or three generations.

Along with the attainment of independence by so many African states there has come a great interest in Africa's past, and we learn more every day about the rise and fall of ancient empires – just the kind of thing we have learnt from records about ancient Asia –

\* Presidential Address delivered to Section N (Sociology) on 28 August 1964, at the Southampton meeting of the British Association.

and about the migrations of peoples. But we don't learn very much about the social changes that accompanied these events. Of course we know that immense social changes must have taken place between the time when men first began to use tools – an event which may have happened in Africa – and the dawn of history. But one cannot hope ever to be able to trace those. We see that different African societies are organized in different ways, but we don't find that they themselves believe they have been through many changes; the older men at least consider that their world was created once for all in the form in which they first learnt to know it, that it has not changed and should not be changing as it now is.

When we speak of changes in society, we mean changes in the rules that govern social relationships – rules about the ownership and transmission of property, the right to exercise authority, the duty to cooperate with particular people in particular circumstances. In the main, these rules seem to have been little affected by the events that we know of in the pre-colonial history of Africa. We know that some peoples in their migrations took care to preserve their social structure as nearly unchanged as possible; for example, the Tiv in northern Nigeria, when they migrated, moved in such a way that the same land-owning groups were always neighbours. Conquest by invaders made conquered peoples liable to pay tribute, and the fall of empires relieved them of this burden, but these processes seem to have made very little difference to their conduct of everyday life. If we have found it is not true that Africa has no history, we must still agree that its history before the nineteenth century was not marked by striking changes in the general character of social relationships, and that if one contrasts the events of the last hundred years with those of preceding centuries, to speak of 'unchanging Africa' – or, correspondingly, of 'the unchanging East' – seems a pardonable exaggeration.

At any rate, this contrast has led a good many people to assume that social change is a peculiar phenomenon which students of society should be expected to *explain*. This really amounts to saying that we don't expect societies to change, although all of us in what is called the western world know by experience that the societies we live in are changing all the time.

JULIAN, W. H. BERRARD

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What is the reason for this paradox? It arises in part from the very nature of the study of social anthropology. Our profession is concerned with the way small-scale societies work; this means that we look for the rules that are generally accepted and the social forces that support these rules. Since we are largely interested in the way societies very different from those of western Europe and North America can work, we sometimes try to picture what this was like before these societies had been radically transformed by influences from outside, as most of them have today. Also, there is a school of anthropology concerned almost entirely with the process by which, in different societies, children are moulded into the kind of person that the values of the society require. Both these approaches are better calculated to explain the persistence of traditional standards than the process of departure from them.

Most British social anthropologists now use as key terms in their discussion of social behaviour the concepts *status* and *role*, which were introduced into the subject by the American anthropologist Ralph Linton. When we speak of status we mean a person's position in his society, as it might be a point on a map, the sum total of his different relationships to other members of his society. To each of these relationships there is an appropriate role: that of father to son, chief to subject, judge to litigant, husband to wife, teacher to pupil, and their reciprocals. In every society the same individual is called upon at times to play many of these roles. One way of defining the structure of a society is to say that it consists in the configuration of role relationships.

One of my most distinguished colleagues, Professor Raymond Firth, has described this as a determinist way of looking at society. To him the metaphor of role suggests a part in a play, with lines laid down in advance from which the player cannot depart. Very few theatre enthusiasts would react to the word in that way. Quite apart from the fact that an actor may forget his lines and supply the lack by more or less inspired gagging, we all know that the smallest roles can be interpreted in half a dozen different ways and the major ones in a hundred. Indeed one writer, Professor Dorothy Emmet,<sup>1</sup> has expressly conceived social change as the cumulative effect of individuals' reinterpretation of their roles.

It is true that in societies which are not changing at a rapid



rate most people's status is given, or, in technical language, ascribed. Some are born to high and some to low status, some to rule and some to serve; and if the accident of birth has assigned them to the lower ranks they are not likely to be able to get out of them. Again in technical terms, the opportunities of achieving higher status are not great; social mobility is little.

But this does not mean that to talk of the role appropriate to a given status implies that each man's destiny is fixed from the outset. Obviously no social anthropologist thinks so, but I am concerned to dispute the proposition that our way of talking logically implies it. Leaving aside the possibility of the reinterpretation of roles on a scale that would change the whole social structure, the roles themselves allow the players a freedom of choice which they use to further their personal interests. This is the freedom of manoeuvre that I want to talk about.

In any society some relationships are given and some are chosen. A very wide field of choice is open to the members of western society; within limits that are set by circumstances and not by prescribed rules, they can choose what work they will do and for whom, what interest groups they will join, what they will do with their property, what religious community they will attach themselves to. In the societies of simple technology that anthropologists have mainly studied, the field of choice is much narrower, but it is there.

In the first place, people can choose with whom they will ally themselves by marriage. In a society where a great number of roles are given through the fact of kinship and its obligations, the question with whom one will contract the additional obligations of affinity is of the utmost moment; this is why young people are not allowed to choose their mates without their parents' consent. In these societies, where polygamy is generally permitted, a marriage is the conclusion of an alliance, and by making a series of alliances in different directions a man can become influential as a negotiator between the people of his own and neighbouring communities. This is one way of building up prestige.

Then people have some freedom to choose where they will live. Even in those societies where the solidarity of the extended family is the ideal, one will find people who have attached themselves to a

kinsman outside this group because they have more to hope from him in the way of protection or material help. In agricultural societies a man may choose not to live on the land where he has rights of ownership in virtue of descent, but to go elsewhere, again choosing the person on whom he will be dependent. In some societies there is no claim based on descent as such, but people choose between a number of localities in which they have kinsmen.

The institution of clientship, in which the poor and weak attach themselves as retainers to the rich and powerful, offers another possibility of exercising choice. Several anthropologists have recently studied this institution in East Africa. As they see it, the client may be driven to seek a powerful man's protection because he is an outcast from his own people; or the society may be so turbulent that a big man needs a private following to defend his rights and a little man cannot exist unless he is attached to a big man. But even in such circumstances, a client can advance his interests by finding favour with his lord, so that he is entrusted with authority and with secrets. And there are other societies where it is a matter of free choice whether to live one's life as an ordinary villager or to offer one's services to a chief; ambitious men of humble birth choose the latter for themselves or their sons, as a way of making their fortunes.

The men who can offer protection or material assistance to others use this advantage to build up a following and so increase their own power, particularly when there is a competition for leadership in view. A recent study of a people in northern Nyasaland<sup>2</sup> shows how a man whose ambition it is to become the head of a village will do everything he can to persuade the junior members of his lineage to live in his village and not in those of other kinsmen – another illustration of the fact that there is room for manoeuvre even where there is supposedly a clear rule as to where people should live.

I have given these instances in order to correct an assumption that is too often made about peoples whose social structure has changed little over a long period of time. This assumption is closely connected, in logic if not in argument, with the idea that it is deterministic to talk of a social structure which allocates roles. It is the assumption that in societies based largely on ascribed status



every person's life is mapped out for him at birth – an assumption that nobody would make about western society, though most students of western society find it useful to consider it in terms of statuses and roles. The kind of anthropology that concentrates on what psychologists call the learning process and sociologists that of socialization makes the same assumption, though for different reasons. Detailed studies are made by this school of the explicit transmission of culture – the ways in which children are taught the rules and values, as well as the technical skills, of the society they are growing up in – and also of ways of treating children that are taken for granted rather than deliberately taught to anyone, such as what is so primly called toilet training. When every factor in the moulding of the personality has been explained, the tendency is to assume that all the members of the society studied have been so strictly conditioned that they are unlikely ever to stray from the lines on which they have been set. As soon as this assumption is made, it becomes necessary to look for theories explaining why people ever behave otherwise than the way they have been trained. The theories that have been elaborated are concerned in general with items of behaviour rather than with social relationships.

At this point one should perhaps ask why people should recently have become so much interested in social change. Most of us have been taught history of some kind at school, and although I know it is possible to teach history without having much idea that one's own society has changed over the centuries, most English people are aware that our twentieth-century world has been reached through a long series of events that both link us to and separate us from the ancient Britons. The anthropologists of the nineteenth century were so conscious of history that they spent most of their energy in trying to trace the imaginary course of pre-history. They invented events to explain the changes that they supposed must have happened, but they would have been astonished if anyone had told them that change in itself needs explanation.

The reason why people have begun asking for theories to explain change is not a philosophical but a historical one. It arises out of the events of the last century in the small-scale societies, and out of the preoccupations of the present day among the same societies.



The nineteenth-century anthropologists, who thought they could trace a series of phases through which all societies had passed, were in one sense on the right lines, though we seldom mention them now except to laugh at them. The series of imaginary transformations of society which they postulated no longer interest us. But isn't there a sense in which it is true that, in historical times, human societies have trodden very largely the same path? Robert Redfield had this in mind when he described his treatment of history as 'the story of a single career, that of the human race'.<sup>3</sup> When he said this he didn't imply, with the nineteenth-century writers, that mankind had grown from childhood to adulthood, or that societies could be ranged on a scale of moral or intellectual excellence. He simply had in mind that all through history the body of knowledge in the possession of mankind, and the application of that knowledge to the control of nature, has been steadily increasing. By means of a series of discoveries and inventions we have moved from the curse imposed on Adam - 'in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread' - to the affluent society. At least, part of the world has: the part in which social relationships have been reorganized in response to technical inventions, so as to exploit the possibilities of these to the full.

The question why inventions have been made at particular times and in particular places is certainly one that calls for an explanatory theory. But this is not the question that is attracting attention today. What everyone is asking today concerns the response to the inventions of recent centuries of peoples to whom these inventions are alien. Inventions in communications made possible the era of colonial expansion. Other technical inventions made it possible to utilize the products of the tropics and the Far East in all kinds of ways. People in these countries were encouraged, pressed, occasionally even forced, to grow for sale the raw materials for factories in Europe, or to provide the large labour force, concentrated in a few places, that is needed for the extraction of minerals. This made an upheaval in their accustomed way of life and in the social relationships by which it was ordered, an upheaval which many of them found uncongenial. But when these countries achieved independence, as so many of them have in the last few years under the leadership of men who have largely

identified themselves with the new ways, their aim was not to return to the past, but to move faster in the direction of modernity that they had been able to under colonial rule. In this they have the sympathy of the rest of the world, and particularly of the nations which already have a fully fledged machine civilization.

What really concerns both the new nations and their friends is not to know why or how societies change, but why they are not changing faster. In other words, the problem for policy-makers is to find explanations of conservatism, not explanations of change.

Is it profitable, I wonder, to approach this problem with the assumption that some explanation is needed for every occasion when a person departs by a hair's breadth from the behaviour that he was taught as a child? I do not exaggerate when I say that this *is* the approach of writers who tackle the question from the point of view of learning theory. When I talk about room for manoeuvre, I do so expressly in order to emphasize the view that details of behaviour are not so rigidly fixed, and that there are major fields of activity in which choice has always been open. I suggest that if the subject is approached in this way we shall find ourselves asking quite different questions and seeking quite different kinds of answer. We ask, then, what people may be expected to aim at in the choices that they make. Dr Edmund Leach gave an answer to this question some ten years ago. In his view they 'seek to gain access to office, or the esteem of their fellows which may lead them to office'.<sup>4</sup> This is his way of spelling out the proposition that men seek power. I would agree with him that many men seek power, though I should not identify power with office. If power is the ability to control the actions of others it can be attained in other ways than by holding office: by possessing wealth, for example; this is a source of power in societies which have few or no recognized offices.

Dr Leach might prefer to call this 'influence'. Many men certainly seek wealth, but not necessarily as a means of power; it may be a means to physical comfort and enjoyment of various kinds. Most men seek the esteem of their fellows, but not necessarily, I think, for the sake of gaining power or office. The significance of the act of choice is that in making it a person may have to weigh



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embarked on their new careers with an outfit of parliamentary institutions provided by their former rulers, and usually desired by themselves. They were initiated into the use of the ballot box in their final years under colonial rule and thus launched, it was supposed, on a career of 'democracy'. Many of the people actually concerned in this operation thought of democracy in rather simple copy-book terms as 'freedom to choose the government', and consequently a party system offering the possibility of an alternative; or as 'government by discussion', therefore freedom to criticize those in authority.

As it has turned out, many of the new states have chosen not to allow organized opposition to the party in power, and in some of them there never was an effective organized opposition. Most of them suppress public criticism in one way or another, and most of them have taken a short line with individuals who were suspected of competing for power. This fact has caused concern in some quarters and sour satisfaction in others. It is popularly ascribed to the wickedness of leaders who are supposed to be bent on dictatorship. At a somewhat more sophisticated level it is explained, at any rate in Africa, in terms of traditional attitudes; African councils never divide into opposing parties, African tradition was to allow discussion before a decision was taken but no criticism afterwards. Explanations of this kind provide an answer to those critics who assume that only a two-party system is respectable, and the answer is in keeping with the ideology of the 'African personality', of something different about Africans which makes it inappropriate for them to imitate European institutions too closely. Such explanations are also popular with the school of thought that thinks of tradition as providing an outfit of habits, of stock responses among which the people try to find the appropriate one to deal with a new situation.

But this is not all that is happening in the new states, whether in Africa or in Asia. It is true that they have had presented to them an outfit of political institutions that they might well not have developed in isolation. A large number of new political roles have been created, with a certain amount of instruction, in the form of a written constitution, as to how they should be played. But the instructions hardly do more than set the scene; the lines have not

been written. In other words, this is an *open situation*; the actors can make what they like of it.

Now the contrast between the traditional political systems with hereditary rulers and the modern-style constitutions of the new states is precisely that in the old systems positions of authority are ascribed, while in the new ones they are achieved. Certainly, as Dr Leach has remarked, there was always competition for office, but the competition was open only to men of the right lineage. Now the field of competition is much wider: theoretically it is unlimited; this is the one of the implications of the word democracy that is most congenial to men with ambitions. New fields are open for the attainment and exercise of power, and new men enter them – people who see how to take advantage of a new situation.

They work out for themselves the means of attaining and holding power, using methods that are not narrowly defined by tradition but have been utilized from the beginning of time – rewards for services, revenge for injuries. Does anyone suppose that these principles don't operate in what we call democratic politics? The situation in which they are manoeuvring gives them a good deal more freedom than is characteristic of the older democracies, and they naturally take advantage of this. I mean that in most of the new states the proportion of people who are capable of forming views about the problems that confront a modern government is so small that there is no material to make opposition parties out of, or a critical Press. Of course there is discontent, but it is inarticulate discontent, of the kind that can be too easily answered by telling people they don't know what's good for them. This is just what the colonial rulers used to tell them, but again I am not suggesting that the new leaders are simply imitating their predecessors or, as it is sometimes called, borrowing from their culture.

I should seek the explanation neither in the imitation of a foreign culture nor in the attempt to apply traditional methods in a new situation. Rather I would say that here the new rulers have found themselves freed from traditional checks, because they do not have the relationship with the mass of the population that the traditional rulers had with their much smaller numbers of subjects. They have a new reason for disregarding criticism, because



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unlike the older rulers they do not see the world through the same eyes as their subjects, and they are occupied with affairs that leave them little time for that listening to personal grievances which was a large part of the traditional rulers' duty.

Clearly the struggle for power in the new African states is not going to be fought out in the more or less gentlemanly manner characteristic of countries with rival political parties. But this is not a matter of tradition or temperament; it is simply a matter of historical circumstances. In the newly independent states a number of roles have been vacated by European bureaucrats, and a number of others have been created by constitution-makers, both before and after independence. The public expectation of these roles is ill-defined; a few people expected them to be played strictly in accordance with the assumptions of older parliamentary democracies, a very much larger number had no particular expectations and didn't much care. Those who have filled the roles, whether they have sought them from a sense of mission or from less altruistic motives, have interpreted them in the manner that seemed to them best calculated to maintain their authority and maximize their power. The present social structure of these societies offers no effective challenge to this interpretation; as most students of politics recognize when they are thinking about it, phrases in constitutions have never by themselves been effective sanctions against abuse.

I have tried, with examples of people's conduct in different contexts, to argue that the social changes we are witnessing today are effected by social forces that have been in operation in all societies in all times – the manipulation of whatever areas of free choice there may be by people who are able to calculate where their advantage lies. When new opportunities present themselves, many people will hesitate to take the risks with them, and some will perceive that their advantage would lie in the maintenance of the *status quo* if this were possible: they are the conservatives. Both types of person have always existed in all societies. What is peculiar about the changes of the present day in the non-western world is simply the breathless speed with which historical circumstances have extended the room for manoeuvre.

## *How Small-scale Societies Change*

### NOTES

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# Urbanism and Urbanization

Leonard Reissman

The intricate organization of urban society and the complex processes that have urged its growth have been major subjects of sociological inquiry for over a century. This is not an idle claim. It is substantiated by one of the most prolific, voluminous, and detailed bibliographies in all of sociology and by the intellectual calibre of the many sociologists who have made those subjects a major, if not a primary, feature of their work. This sustained and impressive scholarship has resulted in an urban sociology that is advanced beyond most other sectors of the sociological discipline at least as far as theoretical sophistication, the quantity of hard data, and the quality of scientific imagination are concerned. The relevant literature of urban sociology includes, *inter alia*: a dozen theories and models covering various facets of urbanism and urbanization; a score of statistical analyses ranging from simple classifications to complex mathematical models; sociological descriptions covering most of the world's great cities; interview studies over a wide spectrum of the social groups and personality types that reside in cities; and suggested solutions meant to apply to almost every urban problem from architecture to zoning.

Nor is it likely that this heavy scientific commitment will soon spend itself or abate in its intensity. An increase is more likely. The last decade has produced a renewed attention being paid to the subject by sociologists, as well as other social scientists: this is measured by the growing number of books, articles, and conference reports on aspects of urbanism and urbanization throughout the world. A representative sample of that literature would include urbanization studies in several parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, all less than a decade old.<sup>1</sup> A good deal of the increase can be explained by the rapidity, recency, and geographic spread of urbanization. In just the last fifty years, the percentage of the world's population living in large cities of more than 100,000 per-

sons has almost tripled, growing from 5.5 per cent to 13.1 per cent. In absolute figures this means an urban population in the world that has jumped from 88.6 million to 313.7 million, with a significant proportion of the growth added by the countries in Asia and Africa.<sup>2</sup> The world population explosion, to which we have been sensitized of late, is being matched by an urban explosion, for which we are even less prepared. New cities, old cities, and former colonial cities are flourishing in most of the newly independent nations, serving as the staging grounds to transform tribesmen, primitives, and peasants into urbanites and at a rate quicker than ever before in history. Social responsibility as well as the scientific challenge await the social scientists as a consequence of these developments, and many have responded. Sociologists can no more disregard the impact of these events than can astronomers refuse to look at the photographs of the moon transmitted by the television cameras on Ranger VII.

However, it is not current events alone that account for the increased interest among sociologists in urban society. A strong scientific component is also involved; namely, the recognition that the problems encountered in urban studies are basic to the discipline. Urbanization is a principal form of social change that illustrates and illuminates the elements of social change whatever the context. Similarly, the structure and organization of urban society comments significantly on social organization in all types of societies. Some social features, such as bureaucracy and social class, can really be studied only in urban society, but the information gained from such studies serves to round out our knowledge of social organization generally. In any case, the dominance of urban society is undisputed now and for some time to come. Sociologists can hardly avoid urban society as the major locale for study, whatever their primary interests.

Strong and continuous though the scientific concern with urban society and urbanization has been, no established stance towards the subject has yet been achieved, let alone a unified theory. Disagreements have characterized the history of urban sociology, centred around such basic matters as definitions, research techniques and methods, and interpretation of data. Yet, in this instance as is true in the development of every science, the



condition should be expected; it is neither surprising nor disappointing, but an integral part of the scientific dialogue.

Urbanism and urbanization, after all, are complex phenomena. They cover a broad spectrum of human actions and of social mechanisms. Understandably, sociologists confronted by these multi-faceted events differ on the relative importance among those events, and on the nature and direction of the causal links between them. For example, everyone recognizes that industrialism is bound up with modern cities. What is more difficult to establish is the precise character of that coexistence and how each affects the other. Has industrial growth initiated the growth of large cities into their present forms, or have cities with their large labour forces been the stimulus for industrial growth? The problem is not one of chickens and eggs, because different sets of consequences follow from each of the two initial assumptions. Those who accept an historical position and contend that cities have been evolving for some twenty centuries, can point to the obvious fact that cities in some form have existed long before the appearance of industrial society. Hence, they would have us look to the urban dynamics that stimulated industrialization. Others who are dissatisfied with such an indiscriminating definition of cities, have argued with equal cogency that the industrial city was an historically unique urban form bearing only a surface similarity to the cities of antiquity and the medieval period. From this point of view, one would start with the distinctive features of industrialism and then look to the effects upon urban developments. It is not good enough, scientifically speaking, to dodge the problem by standing in the middle and seeing the effects running both ways, for that only confounds the underlying issue that is involved. In order to develop our understanding of the dynamics at work here, it is essential that urban sociologists operate with only one set of assumptions at a time, else they have no direction for their inquiry. The difference in this example, which is one between an historical and an economic interpretation of urbanism, has been one reason why urban sociologists sometimes talk past one another. Only rather recently has the consciousness of that fact stimulated a more relevant discourse than in the past.

The history of urban sociology also contains instances when a

line of inquiry failed, but even in failure added significantly to our knowledge. For example, the efforts of Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess, and their students at the University of Chicago in the 1920s were singularly directed towards constructing and testing a theory of urban ecology modelled after plant and animal ecology; possibly the only such sustained and unified research attack on a problem in the entire history of sociology.<sup>3</sup> They were attracted by the tempting analogy between the several types of ecology and by the possibility of translating the language of plant and animal ecology to the cultural environment. Urban society, they reasoned, was guided by complex cultural forces that were inaccessible to study but that did not have to be studied head on. Rather, the wise strategy would be to investigate the *consequences* of those forces in urban society in much the same manner that plant and animal ecologists observed the combined effects of natural forces acting upon plants and animals in the natural environment. The city by this orientation came to be viewed as a sub-cultural environment in which social competition and cultural symbiosis resulted in a regular and predictable urban pattern. Upon that basis, the ecologists constructed a rather elegant theory to explain the structure and the dynamics of the urban environment. The concerted efforts of this group of urban ecologists produced some of the brightest contributions to sociological literature. Unfortunately, the theory they had built withstood neither scientific test nor the unmistakable contradictions yielded up within a short time by the city itself. From today's perspective, our evaluation must be a sympathetic one, in that an urban ecological theory was worth the effort. The idea was a tempting one and deserved the full attention it received to establish its exact limitations.

Aside from the experiences gained from the past, the spread of urbanization to hitherto rural areas over the past decade has been a powerful stimulus for urban sociologists to broaden a previously narrow cultural perspective. Above all, they have been freed from the dependence upon western history alone to supply the data needed to put urban society into perspective. Now for the first time in the history of the discipline, sociologists can study urban developments at first hand and as they occur in what were only recently primitive or peasant countries throughout the world. As



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a result, it is now possible to chart the pattern of urbanization taking place today as a reiteration of the pattern earlier exhibited in the highly urbanized countries in the west. This opportunity for comparative research in urbanization is enormously significant because it opens up a whole sector for study by which the world's older industrial cities can be assessed as consequences of the same dynamic that is building cities in the new nations. Not all sense of an urban history must be bypassed, but rather our dependence upon historical contrasts is no longer so total as it once was. Doubtless something can still be learned from a comparison of social life in medieval London with that in Greater London today. However, such comparisons are always limited by the narrowness of historical records, which cannot contain the information judged relevant by today's research needs. The Domesday Book, for all of its historic value, cannot validly or conveniently be compared with the Census of England and Wales. Indeed, the order of scientific questions that are now relevant in urban sociology call for comparisons between Greater London and, say, Accra, or Cali, Colombia, or Calcutta rather than between the two Londons.

However, let me postpone the discussion of these points in order to insert a capsule review of the major differences that have waged for so long in the history of urban sociology's development. The significance of the current developments can then be better assessed. Urban sociology, it will be seen, has experienced most of the major problems that have attended any social scientific inquiry.

### MACRO-SOCIAL AND MICRO-SOCIAL: URBAN SOCIETY AND THE CITY

The meaningful areas of the scientific dialogue that have marked the development of urban sociology can be conveniently categorized as differences regarding the orientation to be taken towards the subjects of urbanism and urbanization. As the title of this section is meant to convey, it has been a difference between a macro-social analysis with an emphasis upon urban society on the one hand, and a micro-social analysis with an emphasis upon the city on the other. The first invites attention to the broad and relatively abstract social features of urban society. It leads to a concern with

theory construction and problems of a conceptual order. The second narrows the focus of the scientific inquiry to the city as a concrete and real entity. It leads to a concern with empirical questions such as the composition of the urban population, the characteristics of urban land use, and the attitudes of urban residents. Although it may appear at first glance that the difference is little more than a matter of taste or scientific inclination, there are unavoidable consequences attendant upon each alternative. These consequences eventually determine what is studied, how it is studied, and even why it is studied. The levels of theoretical abstraction, the methods of study, and the type of data considered relevant all differ as between those alternatives.

One consequence stemming from these two orientations determines the method of study. The macro-social, as already mentioned, emphasizes formal theory more than does the micro-social. The latter, on the contrary, emphasizes descriptive analysis and empirical fact, generally eschewing theory except in the most minimal sense. I have deliberately couched these differences in general terms because we must recognize that they cannot be completely black or white. Rather, we must consider these differences as matters of relative emphasis and nuance.

The difference originates in the orientation of the micro-social view towards cities as the primary datum; concrete entities that invite a method of specific description. Urban society, on the other hand, is deliberately more abstract and invites a wide latitude in the way of conceptual interpretations.

The contrast can be highlighted by a few contrasting examples. The macro-social concern with urban society is well illustrated by such classic books as Robert Redfield's *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*,<sup>4</sup> Max Weber's *The City*,<sup>5</sup> and Ferdinand Tönnies's *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*.<sup>6</sup> These works and others like them, have in common at least one aim: to develop a theory broad enough to explain the sociological characteristics of urbanism and the social forces behind urbanization. Redfield's study, for example, a product of his field work in Yucatan in the early 1930s, was primarily intended to serve as a general theory of urban social change; a processual model to explain what occurs as a folk society is transformed into an urban society with empirical examples from Mexico. Similarly,



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Weber was interested in defining urban society through a rigorous logical analysis of the concepts of the city in general, and the historical differences between the European and non-European cities in particular. Eisenstadt, in his summary of Weber's principal contribution on the subject, remarks:

What distinguished the non-European city from the European is the fact that nowhere outside Europe did cities develop as unified communities of their own, with a common *esprit de corps*, a common communal organization and some sort of political, or at least organizational autonomy.<sup>7</sup>

The conceptual abstractions are not part of the micro-social studies of the city which are, almost entirely, demographic and ecological. The clearest examples are the works of the early urban ecologists, whose studies of Chicago covered sociological analyses of many areas, including the Jewish ghetto, the Italian immigrant settlement, the Black Belt, crime neighbourhoods, and Hobohemia. Even recent examples that could be mentioned favour similar characteristics of descriptive analysis and are heavily dependent upon census-type or census-derived information.

Contrast, for example, two quotations. The first, taken from Martindale's introduction to the Weber volume, notes that,

[Weber's] procedure is a model of sound theory construction. He successively reviewed one type of concept of the city after another – the economic, the relation of the city to agriculture, the political-administrative concept of the city, the fortress and garrison concepts of the city, the concept of the city as fusion of fortress and market, the social and status concept of the city, the city as a sworn confederacy, the city as a body of militarily competent citizens – he attempted thereby to isolate and retain whatever was correct in each special concept of the city.<sup>8</sup>

The second quotation differs markedly in intent and in method, illustrative of the micro-social view. It is taken from a recent book by Moser and Scott on British towns, that relied entirely upon census materials. The authors state in their opening chapter:

One is all too ready to speak of *the* urban dweller, *the* urban pattern, *the* urban way of life, without appreciating the variations found both within and between cities. . . . The central idea of this study has been to unravel the relationships between a great number of urban characteristics, and measure them precisely, rather than to study in detail any single

feature. Our approach has been made possible by modern computing machines which can readily assimilate greater masses of material than would have been conceivable in the past. The two main objectives were, first to assemble and collate material, pointing out the similarities and contrasts, and secondly to classify towns on the basis of their social, economic, and demographic characteristics.<sup>9</sup>

The computer on the one side, and the logician on the other, fairly symbolize the differences between these two approaches to the subject. Yet each has had its special scientific contribution to make and it is upon both that today's advances in urban study are dependent.

A second consequence to be drawn from the different orientations concerns subject matter. The macro-social view, taking as it does urban society as the primary focus, must generally move to an analysis of urban social institutions. The micro-social view, by contrast, fixes on demographic and ecological variables as indices of urbanism. In the first, sociologists look to such questions as the urban effects upon family functions, upon education, religion, economic activity, political control, and social stratification. Urbanism by this view traces its mark upon the institutional fabric of a society, just as feudalism did in earlier centuries. It is here that the frequent instances of the urbanizing effects upon the family or religion are the objects of study and concern. How has the family been altered in structure and function to accommodate to the needs of an urban industrial society, one so different from an agricultural society? Or again, what accounts for the rise of essentially bureaucratic structures and rational values in urban religions? In other words, the macro-social intent is to trace the consequences of urbanization through its impact upon the institutional structure as a society is transformed from an agricultural, rural form into an industrial, urban one.

The micro-social view tends to avoid these abstract and general questions in favour of the concrete and specific characteristics of urbanism. Typically, one encounters descriptions of urban populations by demographic variables such as age, occupation, fertility and mortality rates, and migration. Beyond this analysis then lies discussion of comparative statistics to achieve some measurable index of urbanization. There are also studies of the ecology of



land use in the city and of changes in use over some period of time. One learns from this approach a number of facts about particular segments of the urban picture: characteristics of the *banlieue* of Paris and suburbs in the United States, the extent of metropolitan sprawl in England, the population densities in greater Toyko, or the size of population movement into the Chicago Loop during an average day.

A third and final consequence of the difference in orientations regards social change or urbanization. *Proponents of both* views rightly contend that change is of prime importance. One would hardly expect anything different in the case of urban societies. However, change means substantially different things to each of the two viewpoints. Within the macro-social view, urbanization is nothing less than a massive, unalterable, and total social change by which the whole of society is transformed. More specifically, the change to industrial urbanism from any prior condition is a major alteration of the social institutions and central values of a society: from status ascription to class achievement, from traditionalism to rationalism, and from localism to nationalism. It is much more than simply the growth of cities, although such growth is part of the process. Within this context, urbanization is a social revolution: so widespread, deep, and lasting are its consequences.

Change assumes a different order of abstraction and of impact within the micro-social view. Even as the early urban ecologists were quick to note, there is continuous change in urban populations, urban land uses, and in the urban environment generally. In time, fashionable residential areas deteriorate and are succeeded by new residents but from a lower class; commercial facilities invade former residential areas; roads replace houses or impinge on open fields; urban blight grows here and urban renewal rebuilds there. In a like manner, the composition of the city's population must also change, sensitive to the rate and character of migration into the city and responsive to changes in mortality and fertility rates. These alterations of the city's fabric are also types of change, in other words, but of a concrete, empirical order that well reflects the specificity to which the micro-social view is so attracted.

# A NEW FRONTIER: URBANIZATION AND MODERNIZATION

The differences that have been described between the macro-social and the micro-social are in the process of fading in as quickly as one would like but unmistakably so. In some measure, this is the expected result of progress, as more knowledge moves us to unify what were formerly separate pursuits. Doubtless such unity would have developed sooner or later among urban sociologists, but the signs of its appearance at this time must be accounted for by current events.

By far the most direct and urgent impetus for unity comes from the conditions of urbanization today, particularly the urban developments that have begun to emerge in the underdeveloped countries. It is fully in keeping with the spirit of past urban development that it be so responsive to actual events.<sup>10</sup> Booth's studies of London sprang from a reaction to the conditions created by a socially irresponsible industrialism. Similarly, the studies of Chicago undertaken by the urban ecologists were initiated by the obvious variety and social heterogeneity that confronted them in that city, which had become the recipient of a massive immigration from Europe. Today's urban developments in sub-Saharan Africa, in Asia, and in Latin America on the one hand, coupled with the extensive urbanization in the highly urbanized countries of Europe and the United States on the other, are also urban problems that attract scientific attention. As a result, urban sociologists have developed a renewed sensitivity to the need for combining the macro- and micro-social approaches.

More specifically, these world-wide urban changes make it feasible to consider urbanization in the developing countries as an historical reiteration of the process followed some 150 years earlier by the west. Furthermore, if this assumption is valid, it means that the extensive body of data and knowledge accumulated about western cities can provide the standard to compare the progress of urban developments in newly modernizing countries elsewhere. The two sets of events, widely separated by time and culture, cannot be exact duplicates. After all, who would want the whole sorry package of urban problems in the west of transportation, slums, and health hazards to be repeated in the face of what we



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now know and now can do. Even so, much knowledge has not prevented the appearance of those very problems in the new cities. The important point in this, though, is that there is a set of social forces operative today, as they were in the west, which seems to be guiding the destinies of urbanization in the new nations. These are not mystical forces, but ones that have their reality based on the obvious facts that the west is deeply implicated in the development of such countries and that the west provides a model that those countries, for good or bad, are attempting to emulate – the demonstration effect.

We are, therefore, confronted with a case of historical repetition; the very likely possibility that we are witnessing a single, continuous, urban process that begins with a rural, agricultural condition, moves through to an urban take-off, and finally into a dominant, industrial, urban society. With the testing of assumptions of this order, urban sociologists have come to a new and exciting scientific frontier.<sup>11</sup>

Because history can repeat itself only in terms of a selected set of categories, certainly not to the most minute detail, we must specify the conditions more precisely. There are four possible components by which the urbanizing process in the west and in the developing countries can be considered as aspects of a common historical process: urban growth, industrial growth, the rise of a middle class, and the rise of nationalism as an ideology. It is upon them that an urban theory can be constructed within which seemingly disparate historical events can be combined.

First, as regards urban growth, the creation and expansion of cities is an integral part of the modernizing process earlier in the west as today in the developing countries. To be sure, when the west began its industrial urban development, around 1800, the pace of urban growth was leisurely compared with today's urban explosions. From 1800 to 1850, the proportion of Europeans living in large cities increased from 2.9 per cent to 4.9 per cent, and in absolute numbers from about 5.5 million to a little over 13 million. This increase occurred, it must be remembered, in countries with a well-established urban base. In a sociologically comparable period, 1900 to 1950, the number of Africans living in large cities jumped from 1.4 to over 10 million; i.e. from 1 per cent to about

5 per cent of the total population. During the same period, Asian cities increased their populations from 19.4 to 105.6 million people, or from 2 to 7.5 per cent.<sup>12</sup> Considering that most of the growth really took place after 1945, we must accept the urban explosion as very real indeed.

However, the significant feature of this growth lies beyond the figures and percentages. It is in the social dominance that is coming to be exerted by the industrial city over the rest of the country. Where pre-industrial cities remained for decades and longer only as oases in the midst of a predominantly agricultural and rural environment, the industrial cities have engulfed their environment. With the rise of the industrial city, the economic and political centres of gravity shifted to the city. The urban attitude and urban values infiltrated and dominated the prevailing social attitudes, partly as a consequence of the city's control and partly because of the superior communication networks that originated in the city. This same set of consequences is emerging in the developing nations as well. Their cities, either new or as refurbished colonial cities, are the centres where major social policies are determined, for those cities house the national governments and public officials. These cities, just as in the west earlier, are exerting a magnetic effect upon rural and tribal populations, bringing those people into the urban orbit whether they want to or not. Cityward migration, because it is so great and seemingly unexpected, has brought with it the familiar problems of housing, social disorganization, mortality, and insecurity. The transition from a society of villages to a society of cities is not appreciably easier today than it once was for the countries of the west, in spite of our increased knowledge and heightened sense of social welfare.

The emergence of the industrial city, whenever and wherever it has occurred, has brought with it a severe alteration in existing social institutions, social beliefs, and the patterns of order and authority. In this sense, then, urban growth is an unavoidable aspect of modern social change.

A second component of the urbanizing process is the growth of an industrial economy. At the manifest level, this involves a considerable economic shift from agriculture to manufacturing, from the land to the factory and mill. Obviously, the economic shift is



other classes. It was not wholly fortuitous, yet it was external to – and decisively transformed – the system. One can say that such classes of events, because they are outside the system, cannot be taken into account. But if this is so, then a crucial problem in the area of prediction has no place in the accounting scheme. One would have to exclude, therefore, from the possibility of prediction such events as the occurrence of the October Revolution (many people expected February), the rise of Tito, and similar turning points in the history of the countries of Europe.

Secondly, do we want to stop at an 'inventory of factors'? Do we not need to specify in some way the skein of relationships so that we know not only classes of factors but their functional dependencies as well? In what way does a joint family system (a constant?) act to constrain certain types of economic development? Under what conditions do the constants change? Is there an ordering principle which can specify the relationship between the groupings as classes of functional relationships?

#### 11. ALTERNATIVE FUTURES: THE WRITING OF 'FICTIONS'

One of the simplest and oldest ways of conceiving, if not predicting, the future was to envisage the possibilities open to man and then create a fiction which in extreme form men call 'utopia'. (In a somewhat different and systematic sense, the construction of fictions was used by Jeremy Bentham to enlarge the mode of abstractions available to speculative minds, and, quite independently, more than a half-century later, Hans Vahinger was to elaborate this method in his famous book, *The Philosophy of 'As If'*.)

In recent years, the writing of 'alternative futures' has been a systematic technique of Rand and former Rand theorists, particularly Herman Kahn. (Curiously, and quite independently, apparently, of Bentham and Vahinger, they have called their fictions 'scenarios'.) What these theorists do is to sketch a paradigm ('an explicitly structured set of assumptions, definitions, typologies, conjectures, analyses, and questions') and then construct a number of explicitly 'alternative futures' which might come into being under stated conditions. Thus the alternative futures become

guides to policy-makers in sketching their own responses to the possible worlds that may emerge in the next decade.

The writing of a 'scenario' is not itself a prediction: it is an explication of possibilities. What it is, in effect, is the step beyond the 'accounting scheme' in the construction of a number of plausible profiles, and the explication of the assumptions which underlie each of these alternatives.

Herman Kahn, for example, has sketched a number of alternative world features for the 1970s. He has constructed what he has called Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta worlds and indicated the kinds of international orders or equilibria which might obtain in each. Working from an 'accounting scheme' of constants, relatively predictable sequential developments, constraints, and the like, he tries to assess current political factors (e.g. a degree of U.S.-Soviet *détente*, the strains in N.A.T.O., etc.), the present and future military technology, and possible political factors, and then sketch the alternative results.<sup>28</sup>

In these projections, few sophisticated techniques (game theory, systems analysis, cost-effectiveness ratios) are employed to sketch the future worlds. But what we do have is a systematic identification of relevant factors, and the combination of these, to create a coherent fiction or a set of alternative futures. And, to the extent that these alternative futures are realistic possibilities, one has a surer foundation for policy formulations to meet the various contingencies.

A different kind of experiment in conjecture is attempted by the writer in a forthcoming book, *The Post-Industrial Society*. In essence, it is not a forecast but a dissection of the recent past – the 'prophetic past', in Chesterton's phrase – in order to identify the structural trends and structural possibilities in the society and to create an 'as if' about the future. The study deals with the new role of military technology as constitutive of political decisions, the rise of scientists as a new constituency in the political process, the creation of a new 'intellectual technology' (a shorthand term I use for cybernetics, decision theory, simulation, and other intellectual techniques that allow us a new way of dealing with the planning process), and other elements of structural change in the society. These changes are then projected forty years as an 'as if'



accompanied by a series of changes in the centre of economic power, in capital formation, in labour force specialization, in the credit structure, and so on. At the latent level, too, a number of critical changes take place as the institutional structure is implicated: in education, in family structure, in class structure, in politics, and in the accepted social values and beliefs. Industrialization makes it necessary, as Frankel has so aptly summarized it, to repair and maintain; to think of tomorrow, not only of today; to educate and train one's children; to prepare oneself for new activities; to acquire new skills; to search out new contacts; to widen the horizon of one's experience; to invent, to improve, to question the 'dead hand of custom' and the heritage of the past.<sup>13</sup>

No one would deny that the economic conditions facing underdeveloped countries today are vastly different from those facing the west about 150 years ago. Government's involvement today is necessarily greater than it was in, say, England or the United States at that earlier period. Today, industrial development is a conspicuous activity of government and takes place in the developing countries primarily as an action initiated by central government; quite unlike the world of the private entrepreneur that forced industrialization in western countries. Furthermore, the international economic scene today is much more restricted by cartels and patent agreements centred on an indispensable industrial technology, than was the case in 1800. On the face of it, underdeveloped countries must enter the industrial process bearing an enormous disadvantage – the disadvantage that their economic – including technological – resources place upon them. However, the handicap is lessened to a large extent by the west's strong involvement in the process through foreign aid programmes and financial assistance. The west, for political purposes, has sought to close the gap, and by those efforts has set the underdeveloped countries on the way down the same path that the west earlier traversed in its industrial development.

Just as western societies were transformed by industrialization, so again today the developing nations in the world are experiencing similar changes and with similar consequences. As Firth and his colleagues correctly concluded: 'The technical contents of "industrial revolutions", etc., are never identical, but their social

consequences are nearly always similar.<sup>14</sup> In no small measure, the similarity between the two histories has come about because the west has helped to initiate, foster, and assist in the change among the underdeveloped countries. Perhaps there are alternative solutions to the social consequences of industrialization, either deliberately planned or accidental, but none has yet appeared. The technical requirements are different today; so too, the economic and political strategies. Yet the social impact of industrialization seems to strike with the same force and with the same breadth as it once struck in the west.

A third component of the urbanizing process is the emergence of a middle class – the restructuring of power relationships as a society moves along the path to industrial urban development. It is not a simple case of power exchange from an essentially feudal or colonial aristocracy to a newly emerging middle class *élite*, for power is never simple.<sup>15</sup> Rather, what takes place is a social revolution through which the ascriptive basis for stratification (i.e. aristocracy) is replaced by achievement (i.e. classes). The role played by this emerging class in the history of the west and again today in the developing countries, is one of providing the leadership for change: to challenge the existing power structure. Upon their success, the success of the process of urban development depends.

The middle class has come to be the one social stratum most committed to industrialization, and therefore most active on behalf of such changes. In short, they stand to win the most by success and lose the most by failure compared with all other groups. In the west, the middle class consisted of the bourgeoisie, the merchants, and entrepreneurs. It was less conscious of itself as a class early in its development than was to be the case at a later stage. It sought economic freedom and won political freedom as well. Far from being an intentionally revolutionary class, the early middle classes in the west wanted to be accepted into the older aristocratic order rather than to destroy it. In any case, the effect of the successful claim to power by the middle class was a restratification and reshaping of society.

Today, the composition and style of the middle class in underdeveloped countries differs from its earlier western counterpart,



although in terms of social function and goals the two are the same. In the developing countries the active middle class is more likely to consist of teachers, clerks, and lawyers than it is of entrepreneurs in the western sense. They are often western-educated. But they are not as economically secure as the middle classes in highly developed countries, for that will only come later. However, there is little doubt that this class holds the dominant leadership in today's developing nations, distinguishable from the 'imported European oligarchy and the representatives of the pre-colonial ruling class on the one hand, and the mass of peasants and emergent wage-labouring class on the other'.<sup>16</sup>

The social functions served by this middle class, thus, reiterate those served by the middle classes earlier in the west's history: to break the hold of tradition and the loyalty to the traditional power hierarchy in order to pursue the goals of urban industrialization. In countries still close to tribalism or colonial status, as those in Africa and Asia, the middle classes are often the only agents for change. In other countries, notably in Latin America where urbanism has developed and industrialization is proceeding, the middle classes have had to compete with other power sectors of the population in addition to the wealthy and landed aristocracy, including the military, the clergy, and – as in Argentina – an organized urban proletariat. The strategy of the middle class obviously must take account of these power groups if it is to gain and hold power. The transition thus becomes one of shifting balances tenuously held rather than unilateral change. Yet, the role of the middle class remains a pivotal one in that transition, and it is in the city that the arena for this social drama is set.

The fourth and final component of the urban process is the rise of nationalism as a unifying social and political ideology. Its social function, briefly, is to provide a social rationale that makes the development of revolution possible. For nationalism supplies the ideology that can command loyalties, motivate action, and above all, surround the changes to be made with the mantle of legitimacy. It serves as a justifying rationale by endowing the industrial goals of the middle class with social honour and high moral purpose. In addition, it also serves a primary function of replacing that tattered fabric of local, tribal, linguistic, and relig-

ious loyalties with the new cloth of a unifying loyalty centred on the nation as 'the impersonal and ultimate arbiter of human affairs'.<sup>17</sup>

It is not accidental that nationalism both in the west and in underdeveloped countries has been the ideology of the middle class during the early stages of its emergence into power. Nationalism supplies the means to maintain social cohesion, solidarity, and moral consensus during a transition period when basic traditional values must be questioned and finally replaced. Nor is it accidental that nationalism is predominately an urban product. For one thing, as Emerson has remarked, it is in the cities of colonial countries 'that regular contact with the white man brings the vivid sense of contrast between his modes and standards of life and those of the native community'.<sup>18</sup> The same can also be said for western cities. For another, the city is the environment of the middle classes and it is in the city that their emergence into power begins. Most relevantly, perhaps, nationalism must be an urban phenomenon because only in the city can there be that broad social frame of reference that makes nationalism intelligible. To the peasant and the primitive who live out their lives in small and relatively isolated areas, the idea of the nation is meaningless. The village represents the boundaries of their social geography, and beyond them there is only the great unknown. Nationalism thus destroys that social geography by which the large mass of a pre-industrial population organizes its world. It requires that one disregard the manifest differences in speech, manner, dress, language, and religion in order to focus instead upon the latent and abstract communalities that finally make the nation.

Born in the city, nationalism assumes control of a society's destiny and in time spreads out to the countryside where it can weld together the disparate social elements and social groups into a unified community. As Silvert rightly has concluded:

Nationalism as a social value has been the major cohesive force to date within each separate modern society, and . . . its existence in underdeveloped areas is a natural part of the process of development, very often anticipatory of the social class structure which is its only real justification and its only ultimately legitimate social reason for being.<sup>19</sup>



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In summary, then, urbanization is not a simple process of city growth, but a complex social transformation. We can observe that transformation today in the developing countries as a repetition of the west's history, at least in terms of the four components of urban growth, industrialization, the emergence of a middle class, and the rise of nationalism as a unifying social ideology.

### NEXT DEVELOPMENTS IN URBAN SOCIOLOGY

It seems quite clear by this time that urban sociology has reached a new and significant plateau in its development. The differences in approach to the subject, that in earlier decades had urban sociologists working in opposite directions, are closer than ever to disappearing. For the first time, the broad macro-social theories of urban change can be tested in the newly developing nations of the world. At the same time, the accumulation of demographic and ecological facts about western cities can be utilized to test hypotheses about urbanism and urbanization in non-western contexts. The preceding section of this essay represents one attempt at synthesis. Undoubtedly there will be others.

These predictions are not just so much empty optimism. Two developments give it substance. The first is the broad, interdisciplinary character of the inquiry into these subjects. Not only sociologists, but political scientists, historians, anthropologists, and city planners have become partners to the venture, both at home and abroad. A growing number of studies by many different specialists is supplying information about countries throughout the world: information that is unparalleled in urban sociology. Written from different perspectives, these data present a contrasting picture of urban developments in a wide variety of cultural settings. The second development has been the increased availability of census materials and statistics, in most countries for the first time. As might be expected, such statistics from the underdeveloped countries are as yet unreliable, because the census in those countries is interpreted as a political document. Furthermore, illiterates have little understanding of the aims of a census and of its scientific purposes. Nevertheless, once started, it is certain that

successive census reports will increase in accuracy, and, commensurately, in scientific utility.

We are still some way from fully understanding the impact of urban developments, especially in the highly urbanized countries. Yet we are making significant gains in understanding the social dynamics that are at work. In this sense, what we learn from our studies of underdeveloped countries will become useful in learning about our own. To those who are concerned about practical applications, the most important need is to ameliorate, if not solve, the problems confronting the modern metropolis. Who can deny that traffic congestion, slum housing and worse, and archaic administrations, are the critical problems that demand solutions? Their solution does not lie in piecemeal panaceas but, as I have tried to show, in fully understanding the social dynamics that continue to unfold in the city. Almost every attempt to predict next developments and to solve those problems put forth by urban sociologists has fallen short of even minimal targets. The reason for such failures has been the sociologists' failure to see the urban environment as a dynamic one, and thereby to underestimate the scope and direction of the social forces responsible for change. It is not over optimistic to believe that the massive urban trends in the world have sensitized sociologists to these aspects of their subject. It is my impression that the level of scientific inquiry, the quality of research, and the imagination of urban theory has been raised significantly within the last decade.

Hence, the quest for an urban theory to explain urbanism and urbanization is not an idle one. Nor are the needs for continued urban research. Only from the systematic knowledge that such information can bring are we likely to discover the dynamics of the urban process. Only in that way is there any chance that we may learn enough to control our urban future; a future to which most of the world will very shortly be committed.

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# Trends and Problems in Soviet Studies

*Martin Dewhurst*

When taken separately most of the problems and peculiarities of Soviet history, development, and society can be compared meaningfully with trends in and features of other, non-communist, countries. Taken as a whole, however, most students of the Soviet Union would agree that the U.S.S.R. has several unique characteristics which make it more rewarding to bring out the contrasts between Soviet and other societies than to stress their similarities. It is hoped that these differences will become apparent to the reader during the course of the present article, which also aims to show why the work of the student of Soviet affairs is different in kind from, and perhaps more difficult and complicated than, the work of an expert on, say, France or Turkey. Some of the current problems facing the Sovietologist will also be touched on, but first we must clarify what we mean by 'Sovietologist'.

Those whose field of research concerns the U.S.S.R. can conveniently be grouped into two categories. In one of these one would place students of law, for instance, who have a special interest in the Soviet legal system, and political scientists who happen to be chiefly concerned with the Soviet form of government. Such scholars generally resist the temptation to write about other matters which affect the Soviet Union but are outside their particular province; they are more likely to make comparisons and contrasts between developments relating to their chosen discipline which are discernible in other countries as well as in the U.S.S.R. itself.

The other category is made up of 'Sovietologists', a word which the present writer uses, without the tone of condescension or suggestion of mild abuse customary in this country,<sup>1</sup> to mean those who are engaged in the scholarly study of the Soviet area *in toto*. They will probably be particularly interested in two or three branches of learning, but try to relate events in many fields to

the situation in the U.S.S.R. as a whole.<sup>2</sup> As there are other communist-run countries, and as Communism is a world-wide movement, the competent Sovietologist must know something about Communism in its international aspects, the Communist Parties in non-communist areas, Soviet foreign policy, and the Soviet Union's relations with other countries.

Needless to say, both approaches are valid, and neither is necessarily more fruitful than the other. All the same, such are the qualifications required for useful writing on Soviet matters, and such are the problems which have to be faced that, in this writer's view, the Sovietologist is likely to be the more reliable guide, and it is primarily with him that this article is concerned.

#### THE REQUIREMENTS

There are perhaps four essential prerequisites for successful specialized work on the U.S.S.R.

First, a good reading knowledge of the state language of the Soviet Union. This is vital because of the mass of usable information published in the U.S.S.R. itself (especially up to 1929 and from 1955), and, in other countries, by *émigrés* (for instance the *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* (*Socialist Courier*), published by the Mensheviks and containing much valuable factual material). The greater part of these sources has not been translated.

Having learnt the language, the student must however then learn the official idiom and come to grips with the Soviet use of words. What, for example, is the real difference between 'ideological coexistence' and 'ideological warfare'? How do 'peaceful coexistence', 'proletarian internationalism', and 'the cold war' differ from one another in reality? He must also bear in mind that Soviet citizens on the whole speak more frankly than they write and, it would be widely agreed, think more freely than they speak. This being so, he must try to ascertain what Soviet people really mean, difficult enough even if he has a flair for speculative interpretation, but absolutely impossible if he has access only to translated material.<sup>3</sup>



The second qualification is competence in Marxist-Leninist ideology. The decisive role it has played in Soviet developments in general can hardly be underestimated, even though on occasion the Soviet leaders may act in contradiction to what the state ideology prescribes. As the regime owes its legitimacy and right to rule to the supposed excellence of Marxism-Leninism as the best – and indeed the only reliable – guide to useful action in any sphere, and as only the highest leaders are allowed to decide which parts of the doctrine have become outdated and dispensable, everything in the U.S.S.R. *has* to be argued in ideological terms, even, for instance, when explaining why there is to be a performance in Moscow of Mozart's *Requiem*.

To choose another example, Soviet articles written in 1964 on the hundredth anniversary of the First International bore a clear-cut relationship to the current Soviet preoccupations with difficulties in the world communist movement. Unless the reader realizes that this is so – and that in the nature of things in the U.S.S.R. it is *bound* to be so – he will be unable to understand what the historians are really trying to convey.

Closely linked with ideological matters is the third requirement for work on Soviet affairs: a clear understanding of the political system of the U.S.S.R., a regime in which the Soviet Communist Party – or its leader – claims and exercises the right to supervise and control *all* spheres of activity. Nothing and no one in the Soviet Union can therefore be 'outside politics' or 'apolitical' – at least not without being regarded with suspicion of subversion. Consequently it is pointless to try to discuss, say, the Soviet literary scene outside the political context in which the literature has been written or published, for 'pure literature' and 'writing for writing's sake' are not acknowledged or permitted.<sup>4</sup>

Fourthly, the student needs a good knowledge of pre-revolutionary Russian history, and perhaps in particular of the intellectual, social, political, and economic developments of the sixty years before 1917. Without this awareness it is impossible to 'place' the Soviet period in the wider context of Russian history and hence to see the events of the last half-century in perspective.

## SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES

Even if one has the good fortune to read Russian and have some knowledge of Marxist-Leninist ideology, Soviet politics, and Russian history, many pitfalls and obstacles lie ahead. Let us now pick out just two of the difficulties which make the work of the Sovietologist so hazardous.

First, the virtual impossibility of undertaking any serious field-work in the Soviet Union itself. Having read everything from official Soviet handouts to testimonies of defectors, most students of Soviet affairs would like to be able to check their conclusions by carrying out some on-the-spot investigation. Attempts to do this are usually frustrated and are in any case exceedingly expensive and by no means devoid of risk. One is therefore bound to admit that the Soviet authorities, who see no difference between independent research in the U.S.S.R. and 'ideological espionage', do not regard serious students of their country with favour.

This of course applies to objective Soviet Sovietologists as well, and brings us to the second great difficulty facing the student of the U.S.S.R.: the abundance of misleading (and often false) information on that country, together with the dearth of clearly reliable sources and materials.

What Alexander Gerschenkron wrote on Soviet statistics of the Stalin period is still valid:

... the problem was not merely to assess the degree of reliability of the individual series, to test them for internal consistency, and to discover the true meaning of a statistical figure which was often presented in a deliberately misleading fashion. Even more important was to learn how to combine statistical data so as to obtain information which never was intended to be divulged by the compilers and publishers of Soviet statistics.<sup>5</sup>

The situation regarding statistics, yearbooks, etc. has clearly improved since then, but there is still a long way to go. It is peculiar and indicative that many students of the U.S.S.R. read Soviet *fiction* primarily as one of their most reliable sources of *facts* about, say, political trends, social moods, and the state of agriculture.<sup>6</sup>

However, it must be admitted that since 1955 there has been considerably more published material which does not appear to



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have been tampered with for political reasons. As an example, let us take this extract from a review of a book on sociology. A recent survey shows the 'time budget' on an average working day of the workers and clerical staff of two spinning and weaving factories in the town of Furmanov.

... with a seven-hour working day the average amount of time devoted to work, including travel to and from the factory, house-work, looking after herself and preparing and eating food by a married woman with a family is almost sixteen hours. And although she sleeps for only about seven hours, her own free time, which she can use for studying, improving her knowledge of her speciality, social work, bringing up her children and simply relaxation (cinema, reading artistic literature, etc.) amounts on average to only one hour, thirty-seven minutes per day.<sup>7</sup>

In sum, because of the untrustworthy nature of much official Soviet data, and due to the absence of any independent, disinterested sources of information in the U.S.S.R., it is a particularly difficult and time-consuming task to give a fair and balanced picture of any sphere of Soviet life.

### HISTORY

Despite the difficulties – perhaps stimulated by them – 'westerners' and *émigrés* have been writing about Soviet Russia since the first day of its existence.<sup>8</sup>

In the 1920s it did not seem to government and academic circles that there was any great need to investigate closely what was happening in the former Russian empire and how the Soviet system was consolidated, organized, and governed. Consequently, the bulk of sovietological work in the 1920s was carried out by *émigrés* and written largely in Russian.

This wave of *émigrés* was much smaller than that which left the U.S.S.R. during and after the Second World War and, although it was intellectually far superior to the latter, it was considerably less varied in make-up. Not surprisingly, much of what the *émigrés* wrote was of political and propagandist rather than academic nature, but of course that is not to say that it is devoid of interest today. By the end of the 1920s some very useful work had been

accomplished (not least in economics), although it was largely unknown to the world as a whole.

The 1930s saw the large-scale entry of foreigners into the field of Sovietology, and their work often reflected that widespread phenomenon of simplistic reasoning and intellectual irresponsibility *vis-à-vis* the U.S.S.R. usually known as 'fellow-travelling'. Perhaps the nadir was reached with S. and B. Webb's *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* (Longman, 1935). Later editions came out minus the query. As the authors tell us,

What we have learnt of the developments during 1936-1937 has persuaded us to withdraw the interrogation mark.<sup>9</sup>

It is perhaps worth pointing out that many western intellectuals who wrote on the Soviet Union were initially attracted to the 'Soviet experiment' for essentially negative reasons: the economic difficulties of the west and the coming to power of the Nazis in Germany. The fact that since, and almost certainly because, the Bolsheviks came to power Russia had experienced a civil war, severe famines in large areas of the country, compulsory collectivization (with the exiling of several million kulaks and their families), forced industrialization, show trials, widespread terror, and ruthless purges (not least of most of the intellectuals who had not left Russia in the 1920s) – all this seemed not to register in the minds of the innumerable foreign wellwishers of that time. Why a one-party state whose leaders tolerated no opposition from any source whatever became the object of almost unqualified admiration by intelligent men and women all over the world: this is a problem which was later examined in a number of books about why people at one time or another became or stopped being Communists.<sup>10</sup> Such writers found that the means of the C.P.S.U. were far more real and important than the professed aim and thought this a key difference between totalitarian and democratic regimes.<sup>11</sup>

Most people forgot this, however, in 1941, and so the west found itself almost wholly unprepared to face the designs of the Soviet leadership once the war with Germany was over and the harshest period of the cold war already well under way. Much that was written on Russia by foreigners in the first half of the



1940s now seems naïve and optimistic beyond the point of foolishness and replete with what may be considered as the most dangerous enemy of objective writing on the Soviet Union – wishful thinking.

At that time most intellectuals both in the U.S.S.R. and abroad felt a speedy improvement in both the material and the non-material conditions of life in the Soviet Union was not only probable, but certain to come once the war was over. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary Soviet citizens thought otherwise, and many of those who found themselves outside the U.S.S.R. in 1945 pleaded with the allies to be allowed to stay abroad. The unusual and tragic situation of people trying desperately to avoid being sent back to their native land was little understood at the time, but when the case histories and attitudes of this extremely variegated group of people had been studied, enough data on most aspects of Soviet life were available to form the basis for intelligent writing on Soviet affairs.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time as greater information on the U.S.S.R. under Stalin was becoming known to foreigners, one East European country after another was taken over by local Communists who at that time could be trusted to do anything the Kremlin asked of them. Not surprisingly, many people wondered where this process would stop, especially in view of the large Communist Parties in Italy and France, and thus it was considered urgently necessary for more attention to be paid to questions concerning the communist world. The first full-time professional non-émigré Sovietologists began to emerge, but just when departments of Sovietology were being organized or expanded in the west, the Soviet Union was almost totally cut off from the rest of the world. This was no doubt not only to keep the Soviet people in as much ignorance as possible about other countries, but also to hamper those foreigners, already better briefed about conditions and moods in the Soviet Union, who were trying to analyse and remain *au courant* with the state of that country.

However, it is just in this period that what one may call 'scientific Sovietology' originated, and since the end of the war many valuable works have been published, journals started or expanded, and institutes founded or enlarged.<sup>13</sup>

## ACHIEVEMENTS

One hesitates to mention here any particularly valuable volumes on the U.S.S.R., not least because of the availability of a recent bibliography, *Books on Communism* by Walter Kolarz (Amper-sand, 1963). One has only to compare this with the earlier compilation by Philip Grierson, *Books on Soviet Russia* (Methuen, 1943) to appreciate the progress that has been made during the last twenty years in the study of most aspects of the Soviet Union and communist theory and practice. Although the earlier guide contains many references to books and articles which are still of interest – for instance, Bertrand Russell's *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* – the great majority of works listed by Grierson have since been superseded and rendered obsolete.

As for periodicals, the following are required reading for anyone who wants to keep up to date: *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies* (London, quarterly); *Soviet Studies* (edited in Glasgow, quarterly); *Problems of Communism* (Washington, bi-monthly); *Slavic Review. American Quarterly of Soviet and East European Studies* (Washington, quarterly); *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (New York, weekly); *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* (Paris, quarterly); *Osteuropa* (Stuttgart, monthly); and *Ost-Probleme* (Bonn, bi-weekly).

There are four main centres in Britain where one may study and do research on the U.S.S.R.<sup>14</sup> In the capital there are the London School of Economics and the School of Slavonic and East European Studies. At the former one finds specialists on Soviet government, politics, economics, and law, and there is a special course on International Communism. A feature of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies is that students for an honours degree can combine language study with special papers on East European history or 'regional studies'. Work on Soviet economics, politics, institutions, history, literature, and thought is carried out in Oxford, notably at St Antony's and Nuffield Colleges. The Centre of Russian and East European Studies at Birmingham University has some twenty students. The Russian Studies course there covers economics, economic history, statistics, sociology, political science, and the Russian language. In the Institute of



Some Sovietologists find that they can already conduct an embryonic form of dialogue with their Soviet colleagues – and with the population of the U.S.S.R. – if their writings are broadcast, for jamming is now somewhat on the decline. Their books and articles are now read by at least a few Soviet specialists and sometimes analysed and criticized in periodicals.

The slight 'westernization' of the Soviet Union is perhaps linked with the Sino-Soviet dispute, another problem attracting the attention of Sovietologists, and giving rise to a great deal of animated discussion.<sup>17</sup> On the one hand the quarrel *could* force the Soviet leaders to be more aggressive, to organize more chaos in underdeveloped parts of the world, if only to prove that they have not lost their revolutionary zeal. On the other hand the angry gusts from the east might help to blow the Soviet Union back into Europe and maybe in due course lead to a dismantling of barriers, the elimination of barbed wire and watch-towers, and, eventually, to the establishment of Europe as a single entity.<sup>18</sup>

If the latter were to be the case, the Bandung Conference, which brought Asia into the mainstream of history, ultimately forcing the Soviet leaders to decide whether their country was a western or eastern power, may mark out 1955 as the turning point, the climacteric year in Soviet development, rather than 1956, the year of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the posthumous dethroning of Stalin. What can be said without any hesitation is that the western world is now making a greater impact on the Soviet Union than vice versa.

As, in addition, the East European Socialist countries may already be giving the Kremlin more trouble than they are worth, the Sovietologist is bound to re-examine past views on how dangerously aggressive and inherently expansionist the Soviet system really is. If the leaders of a more prosperous U.S.S.R. really were to lose all desire to 'bury' other political systems, then, for example, it would probably be safe (as well as profitable) to increase trade with the socialist half of Europe.<sup>19</sup>

It is sometimes said that ideology may henceforth play a less important role in the U.S.S.R. than in the past. One result of the 'split' might be to induce both the Soviet and the Chinese leaders

to gain support and popularity at home by placing more emphasis on nationalism. In this case, the two regimes, taken separately, could become stronger and perhaps more formidable at the same time as the world communist movement as a whole loses its unity and cohesion.

This is prognosis, in which Sovietologists are perhaps a little too prone to indulge. One can at least say that in the Soviet Union of late there has been a shift of emphasis from political to economic affairs, which makes it look as though the main criterion for judging the value of the Soviet system may in the future be its economic rationality, its ability to get things done, to produce the goods. If large-scale agricultural and industrial reforms take place, what effect will they have on society? The implications for a regime based on an ideology are enormous, and may be expected to lead to the growth of a more pragmatic and empirical approach to affairs, to decentralization, to more rational and profitable ways of running a complex modern economy, and to the rating of the expert higher than the local party secretary or *apparatchik*. All this might drastically change the Soviet system and even transform it into something like a Russianized 'bourgeois capitalist' or 'social democratic' than a 'communist' regime.<sup>20</sup>

A further and related trend of incalculable importance concerns the initial stages of the development in the U.S.S.R. of pressure groups – in the intelligentsia,<sup>21</sup> in the armed forces, in the professions, in society as a whole. Without a return to large-scale terror it is difficult to see how bodies of people can be deterred from expressing their own ideas and desires, and already the reader of the Soviet Press can distinguish various groupings striving to make their voices heard and to have their own special demands satisfied. This is most readily observable in the literary world, whose representatives can easily, if crudely, be grouped into 'westerners' and 'russophiles' or, differently, as 'liberals' and 'dogmatists'. As yet there is only extremely limited freedom of expression, and public opinion is a very weak force, but can the growth of either be stopped for long? Is the closed society beginning to evolve into an open society?

One more development of potential importance is the growing vociferousness of Soviet young people, often fairly well, if



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narrowly, educated, generally competent at their speciality, and, now that it is easier to change one's place of work, able to sell their skill anywhere in the Soviet Union. Not only have they grown up in conditions considerably different from those their parents knew and so well remember; they are aware of the horrors of the Stalin era, but are much less intimidated by them than their elders still tend to be. They are beginning to wonder if these horrors were inherent in Leninism and thus virtually unavoidable, and to ask whether certain fundamental changes in the regime are therefore necessary.<sup>22</sup> There is of course a 'conflict of generations' in any healthy, mobile society – though Soviet officials deny that this applies to the U.S.S.R. – but many observers feel that the present impatience of Soviet young people with the older generation is of greater importance than usual in society, and may portend considerable changes in the Soviet Union within the next twenty years or so.<sup>23</sup>

Of course, specialists in Soviet affairs differ widely in their estimates of the degree of support or tolerance evinced by the people for their rulers and for the Soviet system. To what extent and on what level do both the leaders and the men in the street or on the farm genuinely subscribe to the official ideology? Do the leaders cynically 'use' the ideology to preserve their power and limit the thoughts of the masses? If so, are the latter taken in by this; or were they once, but are now groping for some other ideology or philosophy of life? Or do they find that Marxist-Leninist doctrine gives them a satisfying framework within which to evaluate and lead their lives? Which are the least contented sections of the population: intellectuals, workers, peasants, students, city-dwellers, young people generally, Russians, or the non-Russian and/or non-slav nationalities? How does disaffection show itself? Is it meaningful to talk about 'the people' as distinct from or even opposed to, 'the regime'? Is there perhaps a good deal of negative critical thinking but little positive political thought on, and few precise proposals for, alternative paths of development? Do the Soviet people hear or read information originating abroad, and if so does this add to their disaffection? If they are patriotic and sensitive to attacks on their national pride, do many of them feel offended when the outsider attacks the regime under which they

live, even if he explains that he is criticizing the system and not the people or the country?

Trustworthy answers to these and many other questions will be forthcoming only when *Soviet* Sovietologists are able to carry out their research and publish the results unimpeded by the political authorities of their country. Meanwhile, one's consolation must be that the very uncertainties and imponderables make the subject much more intriguing than if there was any prospect of the answers being made available.

Once Soviet scholars can work unhampered by the Party there will be less need for people elsewhere to fulfil the responsible task of shedding light on the Soviet period of Russian history, for it will then no longer be easier to do this abroad than in Russia itself.

In these circumstances it should be possible to stop using the word 'Sovietologist' and talk about students of Russia, just as we talk about students of France or America or Commonwealth Affairs. Sovietologists themselves will certainly not object to this.

#### NOTES

1. It is widely thought that Sovietologists are amateurs, excessively pre-occupied with the more sensational and unsavoury aspects of Soviet life, hacks who take over at the point where 'real' scholars stop. (The term 'sinologist' does not have these overtones to the same extent, at any rate as yet.)
2. For a definition of Sovietology and a brief description of its main trends see S. V. Utechin, *Concise Encyclopaedia of Russia*, Dent, 1961, pp. 507-8. For Hans Koch's definition of 'Sowjetkunde', see *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 50, January 1964, p. 115.
3. On the state of Russian teaching in Britain and for proposals to improve the situation see *The Teaching of Russian* (Annan Report), H.M.S.O., 1962. On peaceful coexistence, etc., see Henry Pachter, 'The Meaning of Peaceful Coexistence', *Problems of Communism*, vol. x, no. 1, January-February 1961, pp. 1-8; G. F. Hudson, 'Hostile Coexistence', *Problems of Communism*, vol. x, no. 4, July-August 1961, pp. 31-6; Herbert Luethy, 'Culture and the Cold War', *Encounter*, no. 117, June 1963, pp. 11-16, and the ensuing discussion in no. 119, August 1963, pp. 64-7; and the section 'End of the Cold War?' and the note on the origins of peaceful coexistence in *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 50, January 1964, pp. 3-39 and 195-201.



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4. The definitive work on the Soviet Party is that of L. Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1960. See also his article 'The Nature of Total Power', in *Political Quarterly*, XXIX, 1958, pp. 105-13.

More work has been done in America than in Europe on comparative government and on the nature of the Soviet system. Political scientists are generally agreed that the Soviet system belongs to the same general category as the Nazi and Fascist regimes. Zbigniew K. Brzezinski writes that twentieth-century totalitarianism is able to reject all types of restraints on its power – direct, indirect, and natural – and finds:

'Totalitarianism is a system in which technologically advanced instruments of political power are wielded without restraint by centralized leadership of an élite movement for the purpose of effecting a total social revolution, including the conditioning of man, on the basis of certain arbitrary ideological assumptions proclaimed by the leadership, in an atmosphere of coerced unanimity of the entire population.' (*Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics*, Thames & Hudson, 1962, pp. 19-20.)

5. 'The Study of the Soviet Economy in the U.S.A.', in *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 50, January 1964, p. 84. See also Jan Prybyla, 'How Statistics are Made', *Problems of Communism*, vol. XI, no. 1, January-February 1962, pp. 50-3.
6. For articles on sociology in the U.S.S.R. (by Leopold Labedz) and opinion polls in Eastern Europe (by Emilia Wilder) see *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 48, July 1963, pp. 57-65 and 118-29. See also A. Kassof on 'Moscow Discovers Public Opinion Polls', *Problems of Communism*, vol. x, no. 3, May-June 1961, pp. 52-5.
7. *Novy Mir*, Moscow, July 1964, pp. 262-3 (in Russian). However, such frankness is still uncommon.
8. For a detailed account see the section 'The Western Image of the Soviet Union, 1917-1962', in *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 41, April 1962; and in no. 51, April 1964, 'Soviet Studies, the Press and the Public', by Leopold Labedz (pp. 87-92).
9. *op. cit.*, 1937 and 1941 editions, p. 1214.
10. There are many works by Russians and others which explain their disillusionment with the Soviet system in particular and communism in general. See e.g. B. Souvarine, *Stalin. A Critical Survey of Bolshevism*, Secker & Warburg, 1939; A. Barmine, *Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat*, Davies, 1938; Victor Serge, *The Case of Comrade Tulayev*, Hamish Hamilton, 1951; Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, Harrap, 1938; R. H. S. Crossman (ed.), *The God that Failed*, Hamish Hamilton, 1950.
11. Also influential at this period, and later, were the writings of the energetic Trotsky and his followers, e.g. *Bulletin of the Opposition* (in Russian).
12. For a survey of this material see Alex Inkeles and Raymond A. Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen: Daily Life in a Totalitarian Society*, Oxford University Press, 1959. For a review of this sociological study from the point of view of a Sovietologist see S. V. Utechin's article in *Soviet Studies*, vol. XIV, no. 3, January 1963, pp. 317-23.

## Trends and Problems in Soviet Studies

13. For a survey of the general situation in Britain, France, West Germany, and the United States see *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 50, January 1964, pp. 41-152.
14. For fuller details about the current situation and proposals for improving it, see *Report of the Sub-Committee on Oriental, Slavonic and African Studies* (Hayter Report), H.M.S.O., 1961.
15. See the section 'Ten Years After', in *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 47, April 1963, pp. 24-104; and the section 'Ten Years after Stalin' in *Problems of Communism*, vol. xii, no. 2, March-April 1963, pp. 1-76; also the articles 'Liberalization: A Balance Sheet' by Robert Conquest and 'Is Coercion Withering Away?' by Jeremy R. Azrael in *Problems of Communism*, vol. xi, no. 6, November-December 1962, pp. 1-8 and 9-17.
16. For insights into Kremlinology see the section under that title in *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 50, January 1964, pp. 154-94; the section 'Conflict and Authority', in *Problems of Communism*, vol. xii, no. 5, September-October 1963, pp. 27-46; and, in the following number of that journal, 'How Strong is Khrushchev?', pp. 56-65.
17. Many articles on the subject have appeared, e.g. Hugh Seton-Watson, 'The Great Schism', *Encounter*, no. 116, May 1963, pp. 61-70; Richard Lowenthal, 'The World Scene Transformed', *Encounter*, no. 121, October 1963, pp. 3-10; see also 'International Communism and the Sino-Soviet Dispute', *Problems of Communism*, vol. xiii, no. 2, March-April 1964.
18. On general perspectives see e.g. Peter Wiles, 'Will Capitalism and Communism Spontaneously Converge?', *Encounter*, no. 117, June 1963, pp. 84-90, and the subsequent discussion in no. 119, August 1963, pp. 70-3; and Raymond Aron, *The Epoch of Universal Technology*, *Encounter* Pamphlet no. 11, 1964.
19. The problems are mentioned in Alec Nove's article 'Soviet Trade and Soviet Aid', *Lloyds Bank Review*, New Series no. 51, January 1959, pp. 1-19.
20. On Soviet economic problems see: the discussion 'The Structure and Organization of the Soviet Economy', in *Slavic Review. American Quarterly of Soviet and East European Studies*, vol. xxi, no. 2, June 1962, pp. 203-40; and, in *Problems of Communism*, the following:  
 Alec Nove, 'Revamping the Economy', vol. xii, no. 1, January-February 1963, pp. 10-16; the section 'What Price Economic Reforms?', vol. xii, no. 3, May-June 1963, pp. 18-32; the section 'Economic Problems and Prospects', vol. xii, no. 6, November-December 1963, pp. 21-37; and the section 'Soviet Workers: The Current Scene', vol. xiii, no. 1, January-February 1964, pp. 25-48.
21. The summer 1960 number of *Daedalus*, a Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts, was devoted to 'The Russian Intelligentsia'. See also Richard Pipes, 'Russia's Intellectuals', in *Encounter*, no. 124, January 1964, pp. 79-84.



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22. Such changes would of course involve legal reforms. For recent writing on Soviet law see: the section 'Crime and Punishment', *Problems of Communism*, vol. XI, no. 5, September-October 1962, pp. 21-32; the article 'The Struggle of Soviet Jurists against a Return to Stalinist Terror', by Harold J. Berman, in *Slavic Review. American Quarterly of Soviet and East European Studies*, vol. XXII, no. 2, June 1963, pp. 314-20; vol. XXII, no. 4, July-August 1964, pp. 34-9.
23. On Soviet young people see: David Burg, 'Observations on Soviet University Students', in *Daedalus*, summer 1960, pp. 520-40 (see note 21); the document 'The Old and the Young' (in literature), *Survey. A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, no. 46, January 1963, pp. 23-30; in the same periodical, no. 51, April 1964, pp. 24-31, David Robert, 'Moscow State University'; and the section 'Generations in Conflict' *Problems of Communism*, vol. XIII, no. 4, July-August 1964, pp. 1-18.

## **Training for Social Research: The Recent American Experience**

*Hanan C. Selvin*

A sabbatical year abroad in 1963-4 gave me a new perspective of sociology, especially in my own area of interest – the methodology of empirical social research. Part of this new perspective is what any traveller gets from meeting people who work at the same trade in different settings: I was able to talk with many sociologists in England and France and with others in Finland, Norway, and Israel. However, a sabbatical year is also a time for reflecting on one's own work; I spent part of the year in thinking about the impact of the high-speed digital computer on social research. I believe that this impact will be as revolutionary as that of the microscope on biology or the cyclotron on physics.

Although the British and continental roots of social research go back to the eighteenth century, the modern development of 'quantitative' research has been largely American. So also has been the initial application of the computer to problems in the social sciences. A critical appraisal of this American experience should be helpful to all those interested in sociology in other countries and especially to those who are concerned with training students in modern empirical research. I was surprised to find that the British not only lag far behind America in their teaching of methodology and in their training for research but that they are also far behind many other European countries.<sup>1</sup>

Thirty years ago an educated layman who picked up one of the sociological journals could understand almost everything in it. Today many a professional sociologist finds these journals so full of statistical jargon as to be incomprehensible. Some critics see this tendency towards 'quantification' as pathological – 'quantophobia' in Sorokin's vivid term. Others, aware of the triviality



and even incompetence of much quantitative research, see it as leading nevertheless to more useful data and better theory.

This is not to say that all empirical research should be quantitative. Historical inquiry and qualitative field work can produce valid results without questionnaires or statistical computations. However, most research today is quantitative, and even sociologists who work entirely with qualitative data – or with no data at all – want their students to be able to understand and evaluate the results of quantitative research. In the United States every major centre of instruction in sociology therefore requires its students to demonstrate their competence in methodology and statistics.

Instruction in such an important area should be of the highest quality. Two kinds of evidence suggest, however, that it is not. Both undergraduate and graduate students have more difficulty in introductory methodology and statistics than in the other areas of sociology (and many of those who survive these courses are so alienated by them that they go no further in sociology); further, too many of the students who earn advanced degrees go on to do research of substandard quality. Travis Hirschi and I have looked closely at quantitative research in the field of juvenile delinquency during the 1950s.<sup>2</sup> Even in the studies that received the greatest acclaim we found ignorance of simple textbook principles and a tendency to substitute elaborate statistical manipulation for clear thinking about the meaning of the data. If these results are at all representative of the rest of sociology, they demonstrate the need for better instruction in methodology.

#### THE NATURE OF SOCIOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

Methodology is the science of the procedures used in empirical research.<sup>3</sup> As it has developed in sociology, it includes three distinct but related levels: research technology, research design, and the logic of social inquiry.

1. Research technology. This is the everyday work of empirical research, the operations involved in gathering data (such as questionnaire construction, interviewing, observation, and experimentation); the procedures of data-processing (such as the handling of punched cards, the programming of computers, and

the construction of qualitative codes); and the technical operations of analysis (such as constructing typologies, coding qualitative documents, and computing statistical measures of association). Most introductory courses in methodology are largely on this level, as are many of the textbooks.

2. Research design. The application of a research technique is usually routine, but the choice of the best technique – or the best combination of techniques – requires experience, judgement, familiarity with the problem being studied, and knowledge of the available techniques. This combination of qualities is always in short supply.

3. The logic of social inquiry. This is the 'explication and critique' of what sociologists actually do in empirical research.<sup>4</sup> In a sense it is the meeting-ground of philosophical inquiry and specific techniques, where the techniques of research are codified and analysed. Some topics in this broad area are the empirical determination of causality, the nature of social measurement, and the place of probability models in research. Questions without direct empirical relevance – such as the possibility of general laws and the relations between sociology and the other social sciences – are more properly part of the general philosophy of science or of meta-theory.

#### THE PLACE OF METHODOLOGY COURSES IN THE AMERICAN CURRICULUM

The nature of undergraduate courses in methodology – indeed, their very existence – largely depends on the educational philosophy of the institution. If the institution aims only to provide a broad, liberal education, and if methodology is seen only as research technology, there may be no courses in methodology at all. This happens often in the small, independent college or in those few large institutions with separate departments for undergraduate and graduate instruction. In the large university with a sociology department that offers instruction on both the undergraduate and graduate levels, the undergraduate student majoring in sociology is typically required to take a one-semester course in statistics and a one-semester course in methods – hardly an excessive amount



when compared with the laboratory courses in the physical and biological sciences.<sup>5</sup>

The place of statistics and methodology in the undergraduate curriculum is secure. One may ask, however, whether the benefits derived from these courses are worth the trouble. Introductory statistics is notorious, not only in sociology but in psychology and economics as well, as a frightening and unrewarding experience. Methodology often vacillates between a watered-down philosophy of science and a set of 'cook-book' rules for conducting research. Neither course seems to have much to do with the sociology that the students find in their other courses.

Part of this irrelevance lies in the choice of topics. For example, social research today uses percentaged tables to study the association between variables, but few introductory courses or textbooks instruct the student in the art of 'reading' such tables. Even more important is the marginal place of methodology and statistics in the rest of the undergraduate curriculum. If the instructors in these substantive courses were sensitive to the misuses of statistics in the research they discuss in their lectures, or if they showed the student how the nature of the research design affects the validity of the conclusions, then the student might come to see that statistics and methodology are important for every sociologist.

#### *Methodology in the American graduate curriculum*

Every department offering a significant amount of graduate instruction asks its candidates for advanced degrees to demonstrate, in one way or another, their knowledge of statistics and methodology. A few rely on examinations, but most have required courses—usually one semester of statistics and two of methodology for M.A. candidates, with an additional semester of statistics required of Ph.D. candidates. There are, of course, variations. Some departments put all the required courses into the M.A. curriculum, leaving the additional courses for the doctorate entirely a matter of the student's choice. Others require two semesters of statistics for the M.A. and a third for the Ph.D.

In most universities the number and variety of courses offered in methodology is greater than appears in the list of courses taught by the department of sociology. It is common practice to list

'recommended' methodology courses in other departments; the other social sciences, statistics, mathematics, and philosophy are most often mentioned. It is my impression that very few sociology students take such courses where their own departments do not require a 'minor subject' in another field for one or both advanced degrees. A more meaningful arrangement is the 'joint offering', in which the same course yields credit towards the degree in two or more departments.

There has been considerable pressure by statisticians and by university administrators to offer a single introductory course in applied social statistics. The social science departments have generally argued that introductory statistics is as much a matter of learning to apply statistical thinking to the peculiar subject-matter of each field as of mastering statistical theory, and that no unified course can provide this as well as separate courses. They are considerably more willing to have their students take statistical theory on an advanced level, when the students know enough to apply the theory correctly. In the major universities I have surveyed there are no examples of unified or even jointly-offered introductory courses on the graduate level, but there are several cases in which advanced graduate courses are offered jointly.

The present organization of required methodology courses is likely to persist for some time, with perhaps the one semester of statistics for the M.A. degree being put into the requirements for admission to graduate study, so that a second semester can be required of all graduate students. Requiring more than a year of methodology and of statistics would mean that these fields would account for more than half of the courses taken by the M.A. candidates.

Since the amount of material to be mastered is steadily increasing, one may expect to hear proposals for lengthening the present programme.<sup>6</sup> Alternatively, as happened in medicine, where first the internship and then the residency were introduced as options, and later became requirements, graduate education in sociology may develop an organized post-doctoral training programme. One such programme was proposed in 1949, but enthusiasm for it subsided with the establishment of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Palo Alto, California. Since



this centre has turned out to be more a place for quiet individual work than an organized educational institution, the idea of a formal post-doctoral training programme may yet be revived. A first step in this direction is the post-doctoral fellowship, but some of the needs of sociology may be better met through more formal arrangements.

One such need is manifest in the mathematical illiteracy of many sociologists, especially of the older ones, who are also most likely to be in positions of power as senior professors and advisers to government agencies. Even in the early stages of the 'computer revolution' these men cannot understand many articles published in the sociological journals. They are thus unable to judge the value of some new developments, and to use their experience to help their mathematically oriented colleagues. In another generation this problem will be solved for undergraduate and graduate students by the drastic revamping of the mathematics curriculum that is now under way in the elementary and secondary schools. Meanwhile, other arrangements are needed. The American Social Science Research Council has sponsored several summer institutes for giving basic mathematical training to graduate students and young instructors. Would it be too far-fetched to envision such programmes for, say, the dozen senior sociologists in each European country? The aim of these programmes would *not* be to change the modes of work of these distinguished scholars but simply to make them an informed audience for those who do work mathematically. From what we know of the diffusion of innovations, this should also increase the proportion of mathematically trained students entering sociology. According to Elbridge Sibley's recent book (see Note 1), this proportion is deplorably low in American sociology; it is even lower elsewhere.

#### THE CONTENTS OF THE METHODOLOGY CURRICULUM

In describing what is taught in methodology courses it is dangerous to rely on the statements in university catalogues; as every student knows, they are uninformative and often out of date. A more reliable guide is to look at the textbooks used in courses of methodology.

Perhaps the most important development in the teaching of methodology in the 1950s was the publication of at least a dozen major works, ranging from general texts that cover all of the important types and phases of research<sup>7</sup> to works on sampling,<sup>8</sup> interviewing,<sup>9</sup> survey design and analysis,<sup>10</sup> and scaling.<sup>11</sup> What is most lacking is systematic discussion of the ways in which these procedures are used to link the data with previous findings and theories to yield new theoretical propositions. Despite this reservation, progress in codifying and analysing the procedures and techniques of research has been more rapid since the end of the Second World War than in all of the previous history of sociology.

The picture is less encouraging as one ascends the scale of abstractness. The treatment of research design in all elementary textbooks is necessarily superficial. Neither sampling nor experimentation can be discussed adequately without assuming some knowledge of statistics, at least enough to make the basic terms and symbols clear. To date, none of the general texts has made this assumption. The textbook discussions of research design do not get much beyond platitudes about bringing theory into research, or Mill's canons as bases for the design of experiments. There are few discussions of what investigators actually have done on complex studies and even fewer critiques of these procedures.<sup>12</sup> Several major works on the logic of inquiry have appeared recently.<sup>13</sup> There is, however, a wide gap between the operations of empirical research and the analyses of these professional philosophers. More collaboration between sociologists and philosophers on the problems of empirical research might help to close this gap.

The situation in statistics is mixed. At the elementary level there are many textbooks intended for students of sociology. No one, however, seems to satisfy both the sociologists and the statisticians. The statisticians want, naturally enough, a correct treatment of statistical theory. The sociologists, equally naturally, want techniques that are useful in the research problems they face and illustrative examples from actual research. There is, I believe, no elementary text that meets these requirements, perhaps because, as with the logic of social inquiry, the required knowledge is not likely to be found in a single person. Here again there is need for



collaboration between a statistician who is willing to consider the needs and problems of sociological research and an experienced researcher who knows enough statistical theory to work closely with the statistician.<sup>14</sup>

If the textbooks at the elementary level, designed for one-semester introductory courses, are unsatisfactory, the situation at the next level is even worse because there are fewer books to choose from. Most of those available were written for psychologists, as is clear from their choices of topics and examples, if not from their titles. Only one intermediate-level statistics text addressed specifically to sociologists has appeared since 1952.<sup>15</sup>

The advanced level is entirely different. Here there is no problem of avoiding mathematics. Mathematics to the level of calculus and matrix algebra is needed even to read these books, and the reader is assumed to be able to work out the relations between the theoretical models and his empirical problems. There is hardly any problem in theoretical statistics of importance to sociologists that has not received a comprehensive treatment in the last twelve years.

The quality of empirical research in sociology has, by and large, lagged behind the quality of methodology available to the researchers. Since most of the mistakes that are made in published research are discussed in methods textbooks and presumably in graduate courses in methodology, this is a troubling picture. The fundamental cause of this disparity between what students learn and what they later do is, in my opinion, the way in which graduate students perceive their work in methodology – as an annoying requirement to be passed and then forgotten. In this respect it is much like the foreign language requirement; a student who learns only enough German to pass the language requirement will not thereafter use it in his research.

One source of this negative perception of methodology is the belief, all too general among practising sociologists, that 'methodology' is only for 'methodologists'. True, some sociologists specialize in methodology just as some physicians specialize in diseases of the circulatory system, but just as every physician must be familiar enough with the general workings of the heart and the blood vessels to recognize when a specialist is needed, so every

sociologist must know enough methodology to know when to call on a methodologist.

A second source of hostility to methodology is the general ignorance of mathematics, which has been discussed above, in another context. If every graduate student understood the elementary ideas of calculus and of matrix algebra, the required courses in methodology and statistics would be transformed, as would the students' perceptions of them as baffling on the one hand and trivial on the other.<sup>16</sup> Some sociologists fear that an increased knowledge of mathematics among graduate students would help turn them into narrow technicians. On the contrary, it is the mathematically illiterate who are most often likely to embrace the newest statistical device without understanding it. If sociologists are to use statistical ideas wisely or even read research reports intelligently, they must know the language in which these ideas are expressed and the logic by which they are derived.

The experience of psychology can offer a guide to improving the teaching of sociological methodology. Part of the credit for the methodological sophistication of research in psychology must go to the *Psychological Bulletin* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania), which presents long, critical reviews and appraisals of theoretical and methodological topics. Nothing resembling it exists in sociology, except perhaps the occasional symposium such as *Sociology Today*.<sup>17</sup>

Another possible 'borrowing' from psychology is suggested by *Psychometrika* (Colorado Springs, Colorado), a journal that describes itself as 'devoted to the development of psychology as a quantitative, rational science'. Although sociology could benefit from such a specialized journal (it is highly mathematical), its circulation would be minuscule. Furthermore, the specialists in methodology can take care of themselves. The pressing problem is to get the average sociologist to be more aware of methodological issues, not to accentuate the separation between methodology and the rest of sociology.

By urging his colleagues to include methodological discussions in their graduate courses and seminars, the individual sociologist can do much to increase this kind of awareness. Several lectures on the methodology of organizational analysis will mean more to the student in a course on large-scale organizations than they do in



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an omnibus methods course. Catalogue descriptions indicate that this is already happening in a few universities. Professional societies can achieve much the same end by organizing discussions of the methodological adequacy of a field of research at their annual meetings.

The most significant technological innovation in the history of sociology is, as I have suggested, the large digital computer. The average sociologist is likely to think of computers as merely an advance over the desk adding machine, just as the desk machine was over pencil-and-paper computing. This view is altogether wrong. The computer offers the sociologist new ways of thinking and working. It can affect his modes of formulating and testing theories, of taking notes and compiling bibliographies, and of doing quantitative research.<sup>18</sup>

The use of computers in statistical calculations deserves special mention. This is one of those rare cases where a quantitative change is so great as to produce something entirely different. Consider only the problem of discovering the most important relations in a complex survey – say a survey of the relation between social status and choice of political party. The study is complex because ‘social status’ includes many variables – age, sex, occupation, religion, education, and so on. The conventional procedure for attacking this problem (curiously enough, a procedure nowhere discussed in works on methodology) is to prepare dozens or hundreds of two-variable tables, to combine variables into indices or typologies, and, by constantly working back and forth between hypotheses and data, to identify the most important sets of relations. After months or years of work the investigator has a good idea of the fundamental relations between status and party choice.

Contrast this slow and unsystematic procedure with one of the possibilities opened up by computers: ‘stepwise multiple regression’. In one programme of this type the computer examines the relations between a single dependent variable and a set of up to sixty independent variables; it first selects the independent variable having the greatest predictive power (when the effects of all the others are taken into account) and provides a measure of this predictive power; it then measures the effect of the next most

powerful predictor of the dependent variable (while taking account of all remaining variables); and so for all of the independent variables. This may take as much as a minute or two and cost as much as two pounds! Its practical effect is to bring the investigator to the same point that he might have reached by conventional means in perhaps three months. Other kinds of statistical procedures that are now done in minutes would have taken years with a desk calculator if they were undertaken at all. A computer will not, of course, take the place of imagination, insight, or judgement, but it can free the sociologist from much of the routine that now interferes with his use of these creative facilities.

#### THE OPERATION OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME

Teaching the abstract and systematic parts of a methodology course poses no special pedagogical problems. The philosophy of science, the logic of social inquiry, the theory of sample design – all these are, in principle, susceptible to the same methods of teaching that have proved effective in other fields. The one element in the introductory methodology course that departs from the traditional form – and the most important part of the course for the student – is training in the organizational conduct of research.

#### *Individual research*

One can learn to do research the way some children learn to swim: by being thrown into the water. This may work well, if there is someone to save the student from drowning. When the skills required are not too different from those that he has already learned, as is true in library research, the individual project is an effective way to learn to do good research. When the procedures are complicated and unfamiliar or when large amounts of data must be gathered, the individual student is handicapped. To postpone the valuable experience of carrying through a research study under supervision until the master's thesis or the doctoral dissertation is not a solution either; it is far better that the student learn through his mistakes when the costs of error are less.

In doing his first empirical research project alone, one of the things that a student misses is the association with a group of



his peers working on the same or related studies. This kind of stimulation and social support occurs in most cooperative projects and in most research institutes. It provides the student with an informed audience that will react sympathetically but critically to his ideas. Several graduate departments have arrangements that meet this need, even if they were not intended for the purpose. A frequent device is the thesis seminar; although the students may be working on different problems, they benefit from being able to present their ideas to the seminar for critical analysis. These seminars seem to be most productive after the first semester of graduate study, when the students have all had the same training in methodology, and when the topics are similar.

Another effective procedure for individual research training is 'secondary analysis': the re-examination of data originally collected for other purposes. There are two principal types of secondary analysis – what might be called the 'comparative' and the 're-interpretive'. The comparative type brings together similar material from a variety of studies. Thus Lipset and Bendix were able to compare rates of social mobility between blue-collar and white-collar occupations in different countries by assembling several dozen studies, each of which had included questions on the respondent's occupation and on his father's occupation.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Hyman and Sheatsley used surveys done over a period of years at the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago to assess long-term changes in the distribution of attitudes towards the desegregation of public schools.<sup>20</sup> The re-interpretive type of secondary analysis uses a single survey, one that has a relatively 'rich' questionnaire, either to do more intensive analysis than the original author had done or to examine a problem that he had not considered.

Secondary analysis allows the student to spend more time on analysis and writing, usually the most difficult parts of research, than if he had to collect the data himself or if the data came to him as the result of his participation in a class project. It may also give him a larger sample and better data.

The most important factor in determining the fruitfulness of individual research is the kind and amount of interaction between the student and his instructor. Careful annotations on the student's

term paper teach him as much as a month of lectures. The quality of the papers is raised even further, and the students learn even more, when it is possible to ask for a rough draft of all or part of the term paper sufficiently in advance of the end of the semester to allow the student to submit a revised draft. In my experience the criticism of the rough draft eliminates almost all of the major errors that are found in a student's first serious piece of empirical analysis.

*Collective research by students*

Almost everyone who teaches an introductory methods course for the first time decides to do some sort of class research project in which the students can gain experience in all phases of a study. After one trial, however, many instructors abandon the class project or carry it on with less confidence that students will actually gain the experience they should. The reason for these disappointing results is that too much time is consumed by the routine phases of gathering and processing of data. Every student should have some experience with procedures like coding, but after the first few dozen questionnaires the marginal utility of coding another one is low. The result of trying to squeeze a full-scale field study into one semester is that the students do not get to do any analysis and often may not see the results. Even in two semesters it is difficult to allow more than a few weeks for analysis and writing, which often account for more than three-quarters of a professionally conducted research study.

If the instructor goes on to publish the results of the class project, the students are also likely to feel that they have been 'exploited'. The instructor thus often faces the moral problem of deciding how much routine work is 'valuable training' and how much is 'unpaid research assistance'.

There are several partial solutions to these problems. One is to scale down the research instruments so that they can be administered and processed in time for the students to do meaningful analyses. Using other students as the population to be studied is also helpful, since students are usually available, cooperative, and literate; and they can be trusted to fill out a questionnaire themselves.<sup>21</sup>



Another and perhaps more effective solution is to 'truncate' the class project, to omit some part of the data-gathering or processing. I have used this procedure successfully in five years of teaching two-semester graduate courses in methodology. During most of the first semester the students go through the steps of designing a study and preparing the instruments. They do participant observation and exploratory interviews; each one reads in the substantive literature of a problem that interests him and prepares a proposal to conduct a full-scale study; and the class collaborates in preparing and pre-testing a questionnaire. Then, at the point where an actual investigation would begin the long sequence of sampling, interviewing, editing, coding, punching, verifying, and tabulating, each student is given a set of punched cards from a completed study. He then uses these data for a secondary analysis of the problem he has been studying. Secondary analysis thus makes it possible for the student to get some experience in all phases of survey research during the course, although it does deny him the satisfaction of analysing the data of a study he has helped to design and conduct.

The Detroit Area Study (D.A.S.) of the University of Michigan's Sociology Department is a highly developed form of the class project.<sup>22</sup> This is a two-semester course that most students take in addition to an introductory semester of methodology. Each year a faculty member directs the class in a study of interest to him. The students benefit from working with a mature scholar, and, since the study is carried out on a probability sample of metropolitan Detroit, with some of the interviewing done by the professional staff of the Survey Research Center, the students are exposed to the highest standards of design and data collection. When the D.A.S. was established in 1951, the faculty also voted to abolish the master's thesis, in the belief that the experience of working on the D.A.S. and writing a term paper based on the D.A.S. data would be more meaningful. Since few people have had experience with both this system and the secondary analysis of existing studies, it is difficult to evaluate their relative efficiency as teaching devices. All that can be said with confidence is that the Michigan procedure places more emphasis on field experience and the other procedure on analysis and writing.<sup>23</sup>

A statistics laboratory with desk calculators and adding machines is a universal adjunct to courses in elementary statistics. Other kinds of research facilities are less common at the undergraduate college than at the centres of graduate instruction. Every major graduate department makes punched-card equipment available to students, at least the simpler machines; and there is usually a central machine facility for more complex operations. High-speed computers are generally available on university campuses and even at some smaller colleges.

One of the most important facilities in the education of graduate students is a set of rooms where they can meet informally in large or small groups – conference rooms, small study rooms, and lounges. The more opportunities are provided for students to meet and work together – especially in mixed groups of beginning and advanced students – the more rapid will be their socialization into the role of professional sociologist.

#### THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The development of organized empirical research in the social sciences has been an important feature of American universities during the middle third of the twentieth century.<sup>24</sup> There is a wide variety of such organizations, ranging from some that are located entirely within a university department and are used for student training and individual faculty research to the 'autonomous research institutes', which may have buildings of their own, large staffs, and annual budgets that run into millions of dollars. These institutes have four major intellectual functions:

to do substantive research; to train younger research people; to relate the institute's work to the general academic teaching in the pertinent subject matter; and, finally, to relate the work of the center to the ongoing concerns of the outside community in terms of service and advice.<sup>25</sup>

These functions are obviously related. An institute that does substantive research on problems of public interest has both the need and the facilities to train its staff in new methodological developments. This is one reason for the effectiveness of the methodological training provided by research institutes. A more



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important reason for this effectiveness is the wide variety of social forms that the institute brings into the training of its staff.

### *Research assistants*

On small projects the relationship between the research assistant and the investigator resembles that between the apprentice and the master. However, the organized nature of modern research has brought some important differences to this relationship. All large projects, and most small ones, are supported by grants from outside agencies, and this means a commitment to 'produce something' – to be 'efficient'. Research tasks become rationalized and specialized, and a concern with training gives way before the pressures of time and money.

### *Project activities*

Projects with staffs larger than two or three people may give kinds of training that are not feasible for the single investigator and a single assistant. The assistants, as a group of peers, are both more willing to criticize each other's work and less defensive about receiving criticism from each other. Where new or complex procedures are required, the project may even develop informal study groups. The topics studied by groups I have observed include mathematics, factor analysis, and computer programming.

Larger projects often have their own seminars during the analysis of the data. When the project director is also a member of the university's teaching staff, these project seminars are sometimes integrated with a regular graduate seminar. There is, however, a great difference in educational impact between the project-centred seminar, in which all of the participants have a common background and related interests, and the usual graduate seminar, in which the students have different levels of training and are working with different bodies of data. Many Ph.D.s of the post-war generation consider the project seminar the high point of their sociological education – in theory and substance, as well as in methodology.

Most training activities of research institutes are informal and unplanned, arising out of the needs of the studies and the interests of the staff. Some institutes, however, are much more active in

training than are others. In large part this difference stems from variations in organizational structure and in the kinds of studies that are done.

The more an institute draws its staff from the regular departments of a university, the more training it is likely to offer. When instructors divide their time between teaching and organized research, and when research assistants are recruited from the best graduate students, the boundary between the seminar and the institute becomes less distinct.

The relationship between a research institute and a single university department can, however, be too close. When the institute is essentially a laboratory for the research methods courses, it cannot develop the kind of sustained and close interaction among the staff members that so often leads to informal training activities. The key factor here is autonomy. Only an institute free to undertake its own research will develop training programmes. It follows that training will not be important in the organizations whose main function is to provide facilities or services (such as tabulating machines and expert consultation) rather than conduct research of their own.

Autonomous research institutes that are widely known for their active training programmes, such as the Survey Research Center at Michigan, or the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia, New York, are also general-purpose organizations, not limited to a single field or a single problem. With its narrower focus of interest, the special-purpose institute often finds itself doing the same type of study over and over again. This leads to a 'rational' form of bureaucratic organization, with large, permanent staffs of clerks and technicians performing the same functions on each study and with relatively few research assistants and senior investigators. In such institutes whatever training occurs is at a low level. In contrast, the general-purpose institute is likely to see each study as different from the others, requiring the selection and development of methods particularly suited to it. The dominant form of organization here is project-centred: each project has its own staff of clerks and technicians, and there is a relatively high ratio of research assistants and senior investigators. Since most members of the staff can identify themselves with a complete



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project rather than with a special skill, they are able to exchange ideas with people on other projects and to see the need for seminars, informal courses, or other forms of training. It is thus no accident that the general-purpose institute, closely affiliated with a university but not necessarily with a single department, is most likely to develop an effective programme of training in methodology.

Most of what I have said about research organizations applies only to large universities. The needs of small universities and small departments are considerably different. The close working relationship between an investigator and his assistants that a research institute provides in the large university can occur 'naturally' in smaller organizations. However, the smaller institution is handicapped in conducting research studies that require staffs of interviewers, sampling experts, and other large or highly specialized units. Some of these needs of smaller institutions will be better met in the future through new services and new organizational forms. Thus it may be symbolic that the Roper Public Opinion Library is located at Williams College, a small liberal-arts college far from any large university. For secondary analysis does not require a large staff or an autonomous research institute. And the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago has established a Survey Research Service that will undertake large-scale data-gathering operations for investigators in other institutions. Indeed, this kind of cooperation offers opportunities that no one institution, however large, can provide for itself; the Survey Research Service often can combine questions from several studies into one questionnaire, thus lowering the overhead costs for its own research as well as for its institutional clients. With arrangements like these even small departments can offer their students the experience of working on large bodies of data.

### LOOKING BACKWARD - AND FORWARD

Ten years ago, when Pierre de Bie examined the teaching of sociology, he made four recommendations for narrowing the gulf between sociological theory and empirical research. Since the relation between theory and research is a central concern of methodology, another look at de Bie's recommendations will help

to show how much progress has been made and where more work is needed.<sup>26</sup>

1. Teaching and research should not be divorced; there is an unfortunate tendency in certain countries to leave research in the hands of technicians with no teaching responsibilities, while members of the teaching staff are often prevented, by their teaching and administrative duties, from devoting the necessary time to research.

Progress in this area has been great. In the major universities most sociologists have one or another kind of joint appointment in a teaching department and a research centre, and universities are now becoming concerned with bringing the senior staff members of research institutes into the academic community to teach courses and to supervise dissertations.<sup>27</sup> The problem that de Bie saw is still acute in institutions that do not expect the members of their staff to do research.

2. The theories of sociology should be taught and criticized with a closer reference to research.

An adequate assessment of progress in this area would require a survey of how sociological theories are actually taught. However, advocating the greater use of research presupposes that the research is valid; the state of current research is more easily assessed than the content of the teaching. The average quality of the research published today appears to be better than that of ten years ago, but the improvement in quality is by no means commensurate with the increased availability of methodological knowledge. Research in an area like delinquency will have a good effect on theories of delinquency only when the adequacy of delinquency research becomes a matter of more concern. Substantially the same indictment could be levelled against other areas of research.

3. Research techniques should be introduced into undergraduate courses by critical study of research work already carried out, or personal participation, on however modest a scale, in current research; individual experiment should be encouraged.

The second part of de Bie's recommendation (participation in



research) is widely carried out, as the brief survey of undergraduate requirements suggested. It is difficult to find out how much attention is paid to the critical study of research that has been published. Judging from reports about undergraduate courses in methodology and what is visible in textbooks, instruction is still almost entirely didactic.

4. Better arrangements should be made, at the post-graduate level, for systematic training in the methods of research and individual work, particularly in Europe, which is greatly behind the United States in this respect.

My travels were not extensive enough for me to say whether European sociology as a whole still lags behind American sociology in this respect. I was impressed by the close relationships between academic sociology and the different kinds of autonomous research institutes in Paris, Helsinki, Oslo, and Tel Aviv. Establishing these relationships has taken some ingenuity. Thus there is no instruction in methodology at the Sorbonne, but those Sorbonne students who want such instruction (and there seem to be a large number) can get it at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, in courses conducted by members of a third organization, the autonomous Centre d'Études Sociologiques. Britain alone appears to be out of step with the United States and the other countries that I visited. There is some instruction in methodology in Britain, and there are research institutes, but only one of the three major universities that I visited has both of these activities, and in that university (London), neither activity involved any member of the sociology staff. The backwardness is all the more surprising in view of the long British tradition of empirical social research (Graunt, Sinclair, Farr, Booth, and Rowntree are only a few of the names that come to mind) and of the pre-eminent place that England occupies in the development of modern statistics as a set of tools for research (it is enough to cite Pearson, Yule, and Fisher). At this time, when the Robbins report has led to much self-criticism in British academic circles, British sociology may well ponder the reasons for its failure to exploit its past opportunities and the changes that might be made in the future to bring it in step with sociology elsewhere.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this appraisal was written in 1962 and appeared in the *International Social Science Journal*, vol. xv, 1963, pp. 597-615. During this period there also appeared Elbridge Sibley's masterful and comprehensive account of graduate education in American Sociology (*The Education of American Sociologists*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1963). There are many points of agreement between Sibley and myself, but we deal with different problems and reach complementary conclusions.
2. Travis Hirschi and Hanan C. Selvin, *The Methodological Adequacy of Delinquency Research*, Survey Research Center, Berkeley, California, 1962 (mimeographed).
3. Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Morris Rosenberg (eds.), *The Language of Social Research*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1955, p. 4. 'Methods' have sometimes been taken to include discussions of the nature of sociological theory, as in Durkheim's *Rules of Sociological Method*. The modern term 'meta-theory' seems more appropriate for this area. Meta-theory and methodology meet in the problems of relating theory to empirical research.
4. *ibid.*, pp. 2-4.
5. Berelson notes that most graduate students come from the undergraduate colleges of large universities, rather than from the autonomous small college. Thus the faculties that train most of the graduate students are also in control of the undergraduate education of these students. In Berelson's data they turn out to approve the preparation of the graduate students in their major subjects and to believe strongly in a broad liberal education as the best preparation for graduate study in all fields. See Bernard Berelson, *Graduate Education in the United States*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1960, pp. 130-43. For approximate comparisons, the three years of British university education leading to the B.Sc. or B.A. are equivalent to the third and fourth years of American undergraduate education and the first year of graduate education. Although both British and continental universities award doctoral degrees in sociology, the American degree requires one or two years of formal education in addition to the dissertation while the European degrees require only the writing of a dissertation. However satisfactory the European procedure may be in traditional humanistic subjects it is grossly inadequate as a preparation for modern empirical research; and the kind of solitary work that it requires cannot provide the socialization into professional norms of behaviour that American students get in their advanced graduate education.
6. The actual time spent in working for the doctorate is not much more than three years of full-time work, although the elapsed time may be much greater (Berelson, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-65). Berelson predicts that the graduate programme will not be lengthened significantly.
7. For example, Leon Festinger and Daniel Katz, *Research Methods in*



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- the Behavioral Sciences, Dryden, New York, 1953; and Marie Jahoda et al., *Research Methods in Social Relations*, Henry Holt, New York, 1952 (a revised edition was published in 1959 under the senior authorship of Claire Selltitz).
8. For example, Morris Hansen et al., *Sample Survey Methods and Theory*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1953.
  9. For example, Charles F. Cannell and Robert L. Kahn, *The Dynamics of Interviewing: Theory, Technique, and Cases*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1957.
  10. Lazarsfeld and Rosenberg, op. cit.; Herbert H. Hyman, *Survey Design and Analysis*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1955.
  11. For example, Samuel A. Stouffer (ed.), *Measurement and Prediction*, Princeton University Press, 1950; Matilda W. Riley et al., *Sociological Studies in Scale Analysis*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1954.
  12. For a critique by an experienced investigator with a strong statistical background, see Leslie Kish, 'Some Statistical Problems in Research Design', *American Sociological Review*, no. 24, June 1959, pp. 328-38.
  13. Quentin Gibson, *The Logic of Social Enquiry*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, and Humanities Press, New York, 1960; Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Hutchinson, 1959 (a translation of his 1935 book, *Logik der Forschung*); Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science*, Harcourt, Brace & World, New York, 1961; Abraham Kaplan, *The Conduct of Inquiry*, Chandler, San Francisco, 1963.
  14. The weakness of the elementary texts is illustrated by the failure of those published in the last three or four years to take any notice of the controversy over the use of significance tests in survey research. Although there are at least twelve publications addressed to sociologists that deal with this question - journal articles, letters to the editor, and appendixes to research monographs - only two texts even mention the controversy, and neither discusses the issues involved.
  15. Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Social Statistics*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1960.
  16. Several universities offer a special course on these subjects especially for social scientists.
  17. Robert K. Merton et al. (eds.), *Sociology Today*, Basic Books, New York, 1959.
  18. An excellent summary of the basic ideas of computers, their history, and some of their uses in research is contained in Harold Borko (ed.), *Computer Applications in the Behavioral Sciences*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1962. Note the following statement from Herbert A. Simon's foreword to this book: 'There is a growing consensus that graduate and undergraduate students in the behavioral sciences, particularly those who are interested in theory and in quantitative techniques, should be exposed to this new tool as an integral part of their training in research skills' (emphasis added).

## Training for Social Research

19. Seymour Martin Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*, University of California Press, 1959.
20. Herbert H. Hyman and Paul B. Sheatsley, 'Attitudes Toward Desegregation', *Scientific American*, December 1956.
21. These remarks apply to students in the United States. Students in some other countries appear much less willing to be interviewed.
22. Department of Sociology, University of Michigan, *A Progress Report on the University of Michigan's Detroit Area Study: September 1, 1951-December 31, 1959* (mimeographed).
23. The D.A.S. has been the source of data for many doctoral dissertations (twelve from 1953 to 1959), but this does not answer the question of which procedure provides better training prior to the writing of the dissertation. *ibid.*, appendix A, p. 3. The rest of this appendix lists over forty books and articles based on the D.A.S.
24. Paul F. Lazarsfeld with the collaboration of Sydney S. Spivack, 'Observations on the Organization of Empirical Social Research in the United States', *Information* (Bulletin of the International Social Science Council) no. xxix, December 1961, pp. 21-3.
25. *ibid.*, p. 20. It seems clear that the research institutes of large universities produce most of the empirical research that is published in the United States, but whether or not this research is better methodologically than that done elsewhere is another question. I believe that it is, but a broad survey of the literature would be necessary to support this belief.
26. The following four quotations in the text are from Pierre de Bie *et al.*, *The University Teaching of the Social Sciences: Sociology, Social Psychology, and Anthropology*, UNESCO, Paris, 1954, p. 92.
27. For an example of administration and faculty attitudes towards these permanent staff members, see University of California, Seventeenth All-University Faculty Conference, *New and Continuing Problems in an Expanding University*, 1962, pp. 41-51.



## Twelve Modes of Prediction\*

Daniel Bell

Few people today would declare with confidence that something is unknowable. So secure is the dominion of science that the obverse attitude rules: today we feel that there are no inherent secrets in the universe, and that all is open; and this is one of the significant changes in the modern moral temper. And yet, every generation now feels that the foundation of its knowledge is inadequate and that the social forms as we know them are bound to change. We expect that science and technology will rework the map of society and no one any longer challenges their claims. One of the hallmarks of 'modernity' is the awareness of change and the struggling effort to control the direction and pace of change.

The problem of any science is to understand the sources of change, and in this respect social science is fairly recent. The great intellectual barrier was that men always thought they knew the sources of change, which were also the sources of power: namely the personal will of kings, law-givers, and prophets, those who governed states, drafted laws, and established or reinforced religious beliefs. But only gradually did men realize that behind these visible sets of acts were such intangible nets as customs, institutions, and cultures, which subtly constrained and set the boundaries of social action. At the same time came the slow realization that there were 'social forces' which generated change, whether

\* This paper is not—could any be?—an exhaustive or even comprehensive survey of modes of prediction in human affairs. It was written originally for the *Futuribles* project, sponsored by the Ford Foundation, and published in French under the title '*Douze Modes de prévision*'. The *Futuribles* project, under the direction of Bertrand de Jouvenel, is an effort to stimulate interest and work in the field of 'social conjecture'. After a year, it had published about fifty studies, and this paper was intended as a stocktaking venture; i.e. to undertake, on the basis of the *Futuribles* papers and other work, a preliminary sorting of approaches in social sciences.

they be impersonal processes such as demographic pressures (increased size and density of populations), technology, and science, or conscious strivings such as the demands of disadvantaged groups for equality or social mobility.

It is the modern *hubris* that we can effect the conscious transformation of society. What stands in our favour is the fact that knowledge is cumulative; and that, within the open community of science, it is self-corrective. We know more of economics than the 'Political Arithmetick' of Sir William Petty, who started us out with 'number, weight, and measure'. We have clearer conceptual distinctions than Herbert Spencer, with his primitive efforts at establishing social differentiation. We have more complex statistical tools than Pearson or Galton. What is more important, perhaps, is that we have a better appreciation of method. For what method allows us to do is to re-formulate insight into consistent explanation.

In this emphasis on method, the function of conjecture is not prediction but explanation.<sup>1</sup> Prediction can be derived from experience – such as a farmer's expectation of crop production – without knowledge of the reasons why. Only with adequate explanation – an understanding of the relevant variables – can one seek to control or transform a situation. Conjecture, in this sense, stipulates a set of future predicates whose appearance should be explainable from theory. Prediction without explanation is insight, experience, or luck.

In this sense, too, the function of prediction is to reduce uncertainty. By stipulating, and thus testing, a hypothesis, one is able to verify the relevant factors which account for a predicted or observed change. For this reason, in distinguishing different kinds of prediction in the social sciences, I am ruling out historical theories of rhythms, periodizations, and cycles – in most instances, recurrence is not really identity but, at best, analogy – wherein the investigator seeks for the Pythagorean number which rules the wheel of history or imposes a diachronic pattern on the rise and fall of civilizations.

In sorting out the different modes of prediction, I shall not be concerned with the relevant methodological tests of adequacy. The sorting is an effort to illustrate the range of approaches in the art



of conjecture. The different modes are not 'equal' to each other in the level of generality or scope of comprehension. Inevitably there are some overlaps, and a stricter reading might show that one mode subsumes some of the others. But to the extent that one can sort out a distinct number of types, the next step would be to order them in some logical classification and specify which mode of conjecture would be appropriate to what kind of problem.

## 1. SOCIAL PHYSICS

The Comtean quest for 'social laws' in which some basic regularities of human behaviour or some major variables such as mass, pressure, or gravitational velocity could be synthesized into a set of formulas akin to Newtonian or the later statistical mechanics of Willard Gibbs finds few serious adherents in the social sciences today. Yet one such model, Marx's 'laws of motion' of capitalism, has been one of the most influential ideological doctrines of the past century, and to the extent that it is still an element in the Bolshevik belief-system, it is a factor in assessing communist policy.

Questions of politics apart, the Marxian model is still one of the most comprehensive efforts to create a large-scale system of prediction based on the interaction of a few crucial variables. Granted that the model has not worked, its 'logic' is worth explication. Marx began, one may recall, with the components of value as constant capital, variable capital, and surplus value ( $c + v + s$ ), and from these, two ratios become central. One is the rate of surplus value,  $s/v = s'$ ; and the other is the organic composition of capital, the relationship of labour to materials and machinery,  $c/c + v = q$ . These two are the primary variables from which the crucial variable, the rate of profit, is derived:  $p = s'(1-q)$ .

The 'law of the falling rate of profit', which Marx derives from these equations, is the key to the system. Each capitalist, trying to increase his own profit, substitutes more constant for variable capital and ends by killing off the total of profits. Out of this tendency, Marx derives the corollary social consequences: the reserve army of the unemployed, the impoverishment of labour, the centralization (trustification) of capital, a deepening

series of crises, the intensification of exploitation, sharpening class struggle, etc.

One can point out, as Paul Samuelson has,<sup>2</sup> that the model rests on the difficult assumption of fixed coefficients and single techniques, and that modern tools such as linear programming can allow the substitution, analytically, of many alternative techniques in working out adequate production functions (i.e. the combination of units of labour and capital). Or one can argue the empirical point, as Strachey and others have, that the economic system is not autonomous and that a regulating agency, the state, can readjust the 'equations' in response to political pressures.

The crucial element in the Marxian model, which defines it as 'social physics', is that these actions take place independently of the will of any single individual or, in the long run, of any groups of individuals. The interesting question remains whether such comprehensive, dynamic models are possible, even in simplified versions such as Marx employed, and what would be the central variables that one would select to describe social and political interaction.

A different kind of 'law', which has attracted increasing attention in recent years, is that of 'logistics curves', which various authors have fitted to different time-series. The most startling of these are the laws of 'exponential growth' or the 'doubling rates' of different social phenomena.

The late Louis Ridenour has pointed out that the holdings of university libraries have doubled every eleven years since 1870, that numbers of long-distance telephone calls have doubled every seven-and-a-half years, that since Nellie Bly went around the world in 1889 the time for circumventing the globe decreased exponentially between 1889 and 1928 by a factor of two every quarter-century, and since the introduction of aircraft the rate of change has markedly speeded up. Derek Price has shown that the number of journals in science has increased by a factor of ten every half-century since 1790, and the number of abstracting journals has followed precisely the same law, multiplying by a factor of ten every half-century. At a certain point in these growths, 'critical magnitudes' are reached and logistic curves react to 'ceiling conditions' in different ways.<sup>3</sup>



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Ridenour, in fitting a number of such curves, has argued that the process of growth and saturation in social change follows the so-called 'autocatalytic' processes of chemistry and biology. Price has sought to identify more differentiated modes of 'reaction'. He writes:

... growths that have long been exponential seem not to relish the idea of being flattened. Before they reach a midpoint they begin to twist and turn, and, like impost spirits, change their shapes and definitions so as not to be exterminated against that terrible ceiling. Or in less anthropomorphic terms, the cybernetic phenomenon of hunting sets in and the curve begins to oscillate wildly. ... [One] finds two variants of the traditional logistic curve that are more frequent than the plain S-shaped ogive.

One variant is the phenomenon — first recognized by Gerald Holton — of 'escalation' in which growth curves 'pick up' from earlier, related curves in repeated sequence. The other variant is one of violent fluctuation with a logarithmic decline to a stable maximum or a zero. This leads Price to conclude:

All the apparently exponential laws of growth must ultimately be logistic, and this implies a period of crisis extending on either side of the date of midpoint for about a generation. The outcome of the battle at the point of no return is complete reorganization or violent fluctuation or death of the variable.<sup>4</sup>

If Ridenour's equations hold true and Price's generalizations regarding the 'midpoints' of exponential curves are valid, one has here a powerful means of identifying processes of social change and making predictions about the outcomes.

And yet, the history of earlier, similar efforts to find underlying 'laws' of variegated social phenomena should give us pause. In the late 1930s, the Harvard philologist George Kingsley Zipf reported remarkable regularities in such diverse phenomena as the distribution of cities by size, the relation of rank order to frequency of word occurrences, the distribution of the frequencies of publication of scientists, and many others. Zipf tried to bring all these under the roof of a single mathematical relationship, the harmonic law, and devised a pseudo-explanation which he dubbed the 'law of least effort'. Fifteen years or so later, Herbert Simon

was able to show that the similarity of these statistical distributions was not due to any overriding law but was a consequence of the similarity in the structure of the underlying probability mechanisms.<sup>5</sup>

Yet this corrective effort has given us an interesting tool of prediction. For in the construction of such probability models we encounter stochastic processes,<sup>6</sup> where the sequences of outcomes are uncertain and where we are forced to build 'conjecturing' into the structure of the model. The development of stochastic reasoning, using probabilistic models, should allow us to do better estimating in problems embracing frequency distributions, as well as those taking in future outcomes involving the choice of further information.

One older tradition of social physics is worth mentioning: the efforts, initiated originally by Robert Park, to explain (and predict) the growth of cities and other aspects of social ecology (the spatial distribution of units), as a product of impersonal forces such as competition or technology rather than willed or planned volitional efforts. Among geographers and some sociologists, this effort to create a so-called 'biotic' or sub-social framework continues.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. TRENDS AND FORECASTS

The most familiar form of prediction involves some form of extrapolation from time-series either as straight-line projections, cyclical turns, or alternative models based on some definition of upper and lower limits. One can say that this mode of prediction differs from 'social physics' in that the latter seeks some general principle, or attempts to create a closed system; trend analysis takes some selected area and seeks to make a more limited prediction, *ceteris paribus*.

The three major kinds of trend analysis have been economic forecasting, demography, and technological change. I will restrict myself to the last two of these.

Demographic prediction, in the large, has always been under the long shadow of Thomas Malthus.<sup>8</sup> While the exact relationship between the arithmetical growth rate of food supply and the



geometrical tendency of population increase is now suspect, the neo-Malthusians still hold to the general view that the present is in some way an exceptional period and that at some point, either fifty or a hundred years from now, the world 'will have begun to go back', as Sir Charles Darwin has put it, 'into . . . its normal state, the state in which natural selection operates by producing too many people so that the excess simply cannot survive'.<sup>9</sup>

Sir Charles has made some specific estimates. He feels that by A.D. 2000 the world population will be four billion. He cites the fact that between 1947 and 1953 agriculture production increased by eight per cent but the world's population by eleven per cent, 'so that the world was hungrier at the end than at the beginning. And in fifty years, the four billion will be hungrier than the two and a half billion in 1950.'

Leaving aside the question of the definition of hunger, the basic assumptions are threefold: that human population has followed the availability of food supply so consistently that the human animal is responding to biological conditions in no different manner than other animals; that improvements in technology cannot keep pace with the rise of populations; that the voluntary limitations on birth cannot be accepted by the whole of humanity, so that those who limited births would be swallowed up by the others who did not. Each of these assumptions is open to question in some manner. As to the first, while this may be true of primitive societies, it is less so of modern industrial countries where the standard of living becomes more controlling of the number of births; the second is still an open question; the third raises vital political questions, most notably today about the role of China and secondarily of India in the desires of their governments to control or expand population in these countries and the checks thereon.

What this does point up is that demographic prediction – involving individual and aggregate decisions, the role of custom and the adaptation to standards of living, the influence of education and new class styles, the relationship to economic development and the political role of government – is one of the areas where systematic scrutiny of the conditions of prediction would yield important results.

The area of 'technological trends' could lead us very easily,

and temptingly, into the alluring field of science fiction. Here one's imagination could quickly climb William James's 'faith ladder' and turn possibilities into probabilities and probabilities into certainties. While one would assume that the prediction of invention should be fairly easy, since the antecedent conditions are highly structured, the interesting thing is that a review of such predictions finds them to be singularly inept.<sup>10</sup> Reality, it seems, is more recalcitrant than the imagination.

As S. Lilley writes:

The moral for forecasters is: do not predict individual inventions in detail – that is usually a waste of time.

The correct method, he argues, is twofold: extrapolation of present trends, and predictions in the form of possibilities.

The predictor need not be concerned with how a technical problem is to be solved, but only whether it will be solved or not.

The methods of political forecasting – the work of the Gallup organization, the University of Michigan surveys, the Columbia University studies under Paul Lazarsfeld, the work of *Demoskopie* in Germany and *Sondages* in France – would require a separate paper. Strictly speaking, this is not trend analysis, though past trends may be important in such crucial questions as how to allocate 'undecided' voters. At bottom the success of the forecast is a function of the accuracy of the sample and the reduction of interviewer bias. Certain presumed disqualifying effects, such as the poll itself creating a 'bandwagon', can be discounted. The success of *ex post facto* explanation is a function of the 'process analysis' (i.e. the selection of relevant determinants such as the mass media, or personal influence) employed.<sup>11</sup>

One form of trend analysis is beautifully illustrated in a recent paper of Colin Clark.<sup>12</sup> It might be described as setting forth the 'conditions of fit'. Professor Clark takes as a problem the statement of M. Manshold, the vice-president of the European Economic Community, that for economic equilibrium to be attained in Europe, some eight million persons within the Common Market area dependent on agriculture have to be transferred to other sectors. Clark seeks to establish the rates of transfer which



might obtain for each country. He does this by computing two formulas: one, on the production side, deals with the number of persons necessary in the agricultural sector to support the food demands in the country (thus in France, in 1957-8 one agricultural worker provided food for ten non-agricultural workers; in New Zealand, the ratio was one to sixty-two); on the demand side, he calculates the rate at which demand per head for any food product may be expected to increase, based on population growth, income rise, and the elasticity of demand for particular products. At the intersects of the two curves one can chart the rates of reduction of agricultural workers for each country.

Since there is a long history of experience on the nature of income elasticities in the demand for products, Clark has been able to work out his formulas with some exactitude. The theoretical foundation, on the demand side, derives from the observations made less than a hundred years ago by the German statistician Christian Engel; as national incomes rise, a smaller proportion of the increment is spent on food. On the production - or supply - side, one can calculate the increased yields per acre on the basis of the amount of fertilizer, and the types of farming used.

In the Common Market countries, the reduction of eight million persons dependent on agriculture means the transfer of one third of the farm population to other areas. Professor Clark computes, on the basis of rates of change obtaining since 1950, this change will be achieved in ten years in Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium. In Italy, where the size of the agricultural population before 1950 had not changed for more than fifty years, because of new methods of farming, combined with the rising national income and reduced marginal increases for food, the agricultural labour force has been declining at a gross rate of two per cent per annum, so that, if a reduction of one third in the labour force is the target, it would take thirty years to reach that figure in Italy.

It is rare to have social change pinpointed over time with the exactness that Clark attempts. Since the politics, as well as the economics, of these countries will be affected by these population transfers, it would be useful to have a sociologist or a political scientist 'overlay' Clark's predictions with some similar statement of expected social consequences (e.g. how will the voting

patterns in these countries change as a result of the reduction of an agricultural labour force by a third, in ten or thirty years). Clark has set up an 'independent variable' (a product, it is true, of more general causes). It would be fascinating to see if the dependent consequences could be charted as well.

### 3. STRUCTURAL CERTAINTIES

In his *Essai sur l'art de la conjecture*, Bertrand de Jouvenel describes an order of events that are legally prescribed and traditionally reinforced, which he calls '*les certitudes structurelles*'. This type of ordering differs logically from trends, because it does not describe processes or time-series that are derivable from aggregate behaviour, or which may be immanent, but which are based on custom and law.

Monsieur de Jouvenel's example is an interesting one. He describes the problem of a Democrat in 1962 who might like to succeed President Kennedy. He knows that there will be a president of the United States, that elections will take place on the second Tuesday of November in 1964 and 1968, that unless he has a physical accident, John F. Kennedy will be the Democratic candidate, since the party customarily designates the existing office holder. But he knows Kennedy will not be a candidate in 1968 (assuming his re-election in 1964) because a constitutional amendment forbids a third successive term.

Of course Monsieur de Jouvenel, like all of us, had no way of knowing that a physical accident would prevent John F. Kennedy from filling out his term. Yet the 'structural certainties' remain. In this instance it could now be taken for granted that Lyndon Johnson would be renominated in 1964, and, because he filled out less than half of his predecessor's term, he might well be a candidate for re-election in 1968 as well.

Monsieur de Jouvenel has taken this 'prosaic' set of facts to illustrate that much of human behaviour can be predicted because of such structural certainties. Yet the concept is useful because it is one of the ways of ranking the stability of different kinds of political and social systems. (What are the structural certainties in the Brazilian political system?) This concept is analogous to



what sociologists call 'institutionalized behaviour', and in any established social system, the chief problem is to define the prescribed norms, the modes of conformity, and the limits of legitimate deviation from such institutional norms which are allowed by the system.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4. THE OPERATIONAL CODE (or *Les Règles du Jeu*)

Structural certainties (or institutionalized behaviour) are based on a known or open mode of conduct, the rules of which are prescribed and reinforced by legal or moral sanction, and this allows one type of prediction. But there is another form of conduct which is usually implicit, rather than explicit, often unrealized even by the actors, and which has to be inferred and explicated by an analyst. This form is the 'operational code' or what might be called the 'do's and don'ts' of conduct, the implicit rules of the game.

In some instances, such as that of Machiavelli's *The Prince*, these are normative prescriptions for a ruler. But in other cases these are efforts to discern an underlying pattern of behaviour, which is either an adaptive mechanism (or rules of strategy) for a political group, or simply a series of adjustments which permit political survival.

One pioneer in this type of analysis, and prediction, is Nathan Leites. In his work on the Soviet Union, Leites has sought to establish the basic mode of Bolshevik conduct, which he derives from various maxims and precepts of communist patristic writings; but he roots this, equally, in some psychoanalytic hypotheses regarding Bolshevik character structure. In his study of France, he has sought to delineate the 'rules of the game' as observed in parliamentary behaviour.<sup>14</sup>

In an analogous but broader fashion, there have been attempts to establish the 'national style' of a country. The national style, or the characteristic way of response, is a compound of the values and national character of a country. It is the distinctive way of meeting the problems of order and adaptation, of conflict and consensus, of individual ends and communal welfare, that confront any country. It has been observed, for example, that the

American 'style' is one that stresses action and achievement, is fundamentally optimistic, believes that life is tractable, the environment manipulable, and that all political problems can be 'solved'. This does not assume a distribution of such traits among all the persons in the country in any mechanical notion of national character; but it does assume that there is a characteristic way of responding to problems, which is typified in the leadership; and to this extent it can serve as a rough guide to political action.<sup>15</sup>

## 5. THE OPERATIONAL SYSTEM

The 'operational code' is an attempt to infer styles of conduct derived from psychological hypotheses or the value patterns of social groups or countries. The 'operational system', an older form of analysis, is an effort to specify the underlying source of 'renewable power' in a society regardless of the momentary fluctuations of office. Here, too, as in the case of 'social physics', the most direct effort derives from Marx, and the classic analysis of this 'model' in his *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.

Louis Bonaparte, in Marx's analysis, is an 'adventurer' representing no class or social group, although basing himself on the Society of December 10th and the *Lumpenproletariat*. To maintain power, he has to play off one group against another, representing himself as first for the peasantry, and then against them, for the workers, and then against them. Industry and trade prosper in hot-house fashion under the strong government. But the Bonapartist *Lumpenproletariat* is to enrich itself.

This contradictory task of the man explains the contradictions of his government, the confused groping hither and thither which seeks now to win, now to humiliate first one class and then another and arrays all of them uniformly against him, whose practical uncertainty forms a highly comical contrast to the imperious categorical style of the government decrees, a style which is copied obsequiously from the Uncle.

The executive authority has made itself an independent power. But underneath there is still a class system.

Bonaparte feels it to be his mission to safeguard 'civil order'. But the strength of this civil order lies in the middle class. He looks on himself,



therefore, as the representative of the middle class and issues decrees in this sense. Nevertheless, he is somebody solely due to the fact that he has broken the political power of this middle class and daily breaks it anew. Consequently, he looks on himself as the adversary of the political and literary power of the middle class. *But by protecting its material power, he generates its political power anew.*<sup>16</sup>

The point here is that a renewable means of power provides continuity for a social system. Whether the specific historical analysis is right or wrong, methodologically, it does sensitize us to look for the institutional sources of power and to specify levels of analysis. Where a system is established (say, property in land), it is 'neutral' as to 'who' has power. As Schumpeter has said, the rise and fall of social classes is the rise and fall of families, but the mode of defining classes may remain a constant. In specifying levels of analysis, we can try to see what kind of political efforts seek to change the system itself, and which are changes within a system.

One of the problems of modern political analysis is that many 'operational systems' coexist as modes of power. In western democratic countries there is property, transferred through inheritance; technical skill, acquired by education; and political entrepreneurship, whose base is a mass mobilization; and each of these systems provides competing or overlapping routes to power. Yet the identification of such systems and the specification of the levels of analysis is a necessary condition for political prediction.

## 6. STRUCTURAL REQUISITES

The idea of structural requisites focuses not on any underlying systems but on the minimal set of concerns any government faces, and it tries to identify 'strains' or problems on the basis of the government's ability to manage those concerns. The list of what constitutes an invariant set of functions for any political system and the kinds of structures necessary to facilitate performance have varied with different authors. But what the approach does seek is a comprehensive typology which, in the words of one of these system-builders, Gabriel Almond, could allow the political analyst to:

make precise comparisons relating the elements of the three sets – functions, structures, and styles – in the form of a series of probability statements.<sup>17</sup>

In the formulation by Almond, the product of the three sets would yield a matrix with several hundred cells, and an effort to sample frequencies over time by performances of these three sets would create a stupendous problem. Yet the effort to create a typology is the first necessary step for distinguishing different kinds of political problems.<sup>18</sup>

Most of these theoretical efforts, if they ever come to fruition, would produce vast sociological 'input-output' tables; but a rougher and readier use, implicitly, of the principle of limited possibilities indicates some of its predictive value. Thus, in 1954, Barrington Moore analysed Soviet society in these terms.<sup>19</sup> According to Moore, the recruitment to a ruling group could be handled through traditional (inheritance or nepotism), rational-technical (skill), or political (party loyalty) criteria. The use of any one criterion limits the range of workable alternatives for the solution of problems requisite to the system. Industrialization requires high technical criteria, but the nature of the power struggle dictates that top jobs should go to trusted individuals, while the traditional modes of clique groups serve to protect individuals from the competition of those selected by the other two criteria. By setting up these three 'ideal types' Moore posited a number of alternative combinations as predictors of the future direction of Soviet society. One important consequence of this simplified model was the prediction that terror had gone too far and that some new means of rationalization had to be found.

In a different sense, the principle of limited possibilities, by concentrating on the constraints in a system, indicates the limits of change. Edward F. Denison has argued that the institutional economic arrangements in the United States make it difficult to achieve a five or even four per cent growth rate as hoped for by both President Kennedy and Governor Rockefeller. By analysing patterns of investment, sources of capital, tax policies, habits of consumption, etc., Denison argues that an upper limit of three per cent a year can be reached. Any other efforts would require



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some drastic changes in the institutional structure of the society with losses of different kinds of economic choice.<sup>20</sup>

## 7. THE OVERRIDING PROBLEM

Leicester Webb's essay, 'Political Future of Pakistan',<sup>21</sup> provides an interesting illustration of political analysis and prediction which is pitched on the identification of a single overriding problem.

While pointing to the obvious problems of unifying a state whose territorial divisions are a thousand miles apart, whose two units speak different languages, whose population is eighty-five per cent illiterate and which lacks a viable political system, Webb finds that the chief problem which must be solved, before any efforts can be made to deal with the others, is the problem of a social solidarity which could be the foundation for a national identity.

The unity of Pakistan lies in its adherence to Islam, yet Islamic thought, and the retrograde attitudes of the sect leaders, hinders the creation of a meaningful political entity. The anomaly, says Webb, is that Pakistan is a 'religiously-based state . . . at logger-heads with its religious leaders'. From the first, President Ayub has been conscious of this dilemma. In his public addresses he returns again and again to the theme: Pakistan needs an ideology; that ideology must be Islamic. But his two roles are in conflict. As the restorer of order and political innovator, he is of necessity a secularizer; as a solidarity-maker he must appeal to religious sentiments. The answer, says Webb, is that there has to be a radical readjustment of Moslem religious thought to bring its precepts in line with new secular needs; and for this reason 'Ayub is a religious as well as a political reformer.'

Webb indicates the steps that Ayub has to take to break the power of the local sect leaders and to create his own political institutions. There is a clear set of stipulations by which one can judge whether these steps can be taken, and to this extent the paper serves admirably as a means of predicting the course of Pakistan's political development.

The question whether in any society there is a single overriding problem is largely an empirical one. Yet methodologically it is

useful to try and see if such a single problem might emerge, if not in the present, then in the future. In her book *New Nations*, Lucy Mair establishes a proposition that 'the world of technology is one of large political units', and thus raises the question whether some of the new states 'are big enough to stand on their own feet'.<sup>22</sup> In his absorbing study of the breakdown of the Weimar Republic,<sup>23</sup> Professor Karl D. Bracher sets up a model (applicable, he feels, to the political breakdown of a number of democratic states) in which the turning point comes when the established regime confesses that some basic problem seems to be 'insoluble'. In Weimar Germany, Professor Bracher feels that the insoluble problem was unemployment, giving rise to a sense of despair in the regime and a loss of faith in the political system. One could argue that Algeria was one such problem in France in recent years, or that the failure of the Belgians to create an administrative machinery (as the British did in Pakistan, India, Nigeria, etc.) was the cardinal problem in the Congo.

#### 8. THE PRIME MOVER

In Marxian theory, again, the mode of production was the determinant, directly or indirectly, of the political, legal, and ideological forms of the society. There were always two difficulties with the theory. One was the difficulty of any monistic theory – that in explaining everything, it really explains nothing. The other was the ambiguity of the phrase 'mode of production'. At various times, Marx would talk of the forces of production, the techniques of production, the social relations, etc., but meanings shifted markedly. A number of writers felt that if the term had any meaning, it could only apply to technology. At one point, I identified fourteen different variables that could be included under 'mode of production' if one wanted to use it analytically. Yet the general idea of the mode of production has had a powerful influence as the idea of a prime mover of history or prime determinant of social structure.

For analytical reasons, if not always for historical or empirical ones, there may be situations in which a single powerful force can be taken as the independent variable and a whole series of ancillary



in order to see their impact on the composition of the labour force, class structure, *élite* groups, and the like. Clearly that world, forty years hence, will not materialize, for there are many unforeseen and 'uncontrollable' variables (particularly the political weights of the new nations and their own commitments) which will shape the reality of that time. But if the 'as if', as a rational projection of structural possibilities in the society, does have some heuristic validity, by comparing that model with the reality, one might then be able to gain a clearer sense of the actual agencies of social change that were operative in that time.

## 12. DECISION THEORY

One includes in decision theory a wide assortment of new techniques; linear programming, utility preference theory, game theory, simulation, etc. Strictly speaking, decision theory is not predictive because it is normative: it seeks to specify probable outcomes if one or another choice is made. Any adequate discussion would have to go far beyond the length of this paper. The singular point to be noted, however, is that any concern with prediction must eventually explore in detail the formalization procedures of decision theory and seek to assess in what way they are useful in the art of conjecture.

In the political realm – where one seeks to assess the intentions as well as capabilities of one's opponents – where does one begin? One technique worth exploring – though not strictly within mathematical decision theory – is 'political gaming' or 'simulation'. In effect, these are political mock wars. One can, using the Rand technique, set up actual teams and allow them to work out a political game, as armies work out a war game, under simulated conditions of diplomatic negotiations; or one can, with a computer, simulate various situations and work out the alternative strategies and likely outcomes under hypothecated conditions. As with any formalization technique, the added knowledge comes from a specification of the likely variables and an awareness of the range of outcomes, rather than from new 'wisdom'.<sup>29</sup>

But it is at this point that one runs the risk of the rationalist fal-

lacy of believing that there is a true optimal path for any decision. One of the most heartening developments is the recognition of the 'existentialist' element which has entered into modern utility theory, itself the foundation of so much of the work of rational prediction. It used to be that in choosing a strategy in a 'game against nature' (i.e. uncontrolled situations), one could follow a maximin path (i.e. go for broke) or a minimax route (i.e. seek to cut one's losses). Now a third strategy has appeared: one can choose, depending on temperament and values, a maximin or a minimax throw, but then, statistically, one can hedge one's bet by an added probability which has been termed so neatly, 'the criterion of regret'. Now, clearly, the man who invented that has learned the lessons of love and politics.

Why does one seek to predict? This is an era in which society has become 'future-oriented' in all dimensions: a government has to anticipate future problems; an enterprise has to plan for future needs; an individual is forced to think of long-range career choices. And all of these are regarded as possible undertakings. The government of the United States, for example, makes national estimates in which the intentions and capabilities of opponents are evaluated, and policy is formulated on the basis of these short-run and long-run estimates. Business firms now make regular five-year budgets and even twenty-year projections to anticipate future capital needs, market and product changes, plant location, and the like. Individuals at an early age begin to consider occupational choices and plan for university and later career life. If none of us can wholly predict the future, what we do in these actions, in the felicitous phrase used by Dennis Gabor, is seek to 'invent the future'.

In the light of all this, what is remarkable is how little effort has been made, intellectually, to deal with the problems of conjecture. In few cases are there genuine predictions of the order: these are the changes that I think will take place; these are the reasons why I think these changes will occur, etc.



taken over by specialized agencies. In the political arena one finds differentiation in the rise of bureaucracy, etc.

To some extent, one can argue, such a theory overlaps the concept of 'structural requisites'. There are two differences. One is in perspective. The idea of structural requisites is from the viewpoint of the government, i.e. the minimal concerns of any government. The second is that a theory of structural differentiation implies some ordered sequence in the creation of more complex and more specialized agencies for the handling of tasks.

In the new states one has a great laboratory for predicting and testing such hypotheses. In many of these countries, basic functions of the society are concentrated in family and village groups. The onset of industrialization means a transfer of such functions to new and more specialized agencies. Can one say that logically or sociologically such development can be plotted?

## 10. ACCOUNTING SCHEMES

By accounting schemes, I have in mind (following the language of book-keeping) those efforts to sum up in a single case, or nation, or relatively closed social system, a 'trial balance' which arrays all the major factors that play a role within that unit.

The *Futuribles* essay of Edmund R. Leach,<sup>27</sup> 'The Political Future of Burma', affords an illustration of this method. Leach begins with the proposition that the existing situation in Burma ('or for that matter in any other country') may, in principle, be analysed as the sum of a series of independent factors,  $a, b, c, \dots n$ . Social development is then seen as a series of progressions of  $a'$  through  $a$  to  $a''$ , and  $b'$  through  $b$  to  $b''$ , etc. But not all factors progress at the same pace, and a profile of the country at time II will have some but not all the factors of the country at time I.

In constructing a future profile of the country, some factors which are designated as constant could be predicted with a high degree of certainty; other factors are designated as probable, and still others as pure speculation. If one takes the speculations as a range of alternative possibilities and combines each with the constants, one would have a series of delimited conjectures ordered on some scale of probabilities.

In his empirical analysis, Leach distinguishes four groups of factors:

A. Factors with a high degree of built-in stability which, for any short-run historical period, can be treated as constant. These include, for Burma, climate and topography, language, religion, the bureaucratic structure of the internal administration, and certain culturally defined expectations.

B. Factors which are subject to more or less linear change, either in increase or decrease. Such rates of change are not immutable, but they do tend to be relatively stable over defined periods. This would include size of population and labour force, the state of communications (roads, railways, waterways), educational level of the population, numbers of trained personnel, capital resources available for investment.

C. Factors which are cyclical. In politics, as distinct from, e.g. business-cycle theory, the idea of a cycle is more a metaphor. This seems to be the case in Leach's examples: foreign policy ('the allies of yesterday are the enemies of today and the friends of tomorrow'); ruling types (using Pareto's metaphors of the 'lions' and the 'foxes', Leach assumes an alternation of 'the politicians' and 'the men of decisions'); age of government ('the longer an administration has been in office, the less vigorous its action'); age in government ('young men are vigorous, radical; old men incline to caution and conservatism'). Is there, here, truly a cycle?

D. Factors which are wholly fortuitous and unpredictable. These include, in Leach's itemization: the short-term objectives of active politicians; the coercive pressures of foreign powers; natural calamities, including international wars.

The historian, says Leach, tends to emphasize factors of the fourth class. But it may be, he says, that these day-to-day actions have only a 'superficial and transient influence upon longer-term developmental sequences'.

Two broad methodological questions can be raised. Can one dismiss so easily the role of decisions, or what historians call turning points? The annexation of upper Burma by the British in 1885 and the consequent destruction of the existing governmental system down to the village level do not fall, as a factor, under the



CONCLUSION: SOME PROBLEM AREAS

*1. The planning process*

A future-oriented society necessarily commits itself more and more to the idea of planning. This is the chief means of inventing the future. Most of the new states that have come on to the world scene in the last decade have ambitious planning schemes; most of the older societies, to some degree, are engaged in planning.

One plans, of course, for different ends; one plans in different ways (from centralized administrative to 'indicative' planning); one uses different techniques (input-output schemes, systems analysis, shadow prices, simulation). One plans proportions between economic sectors; one does physical planning, as in the layout of cities; one plans for 'guided mobility', i.e. the planned transfer from farms to cities. In all these instances, there is an attempt to direct human actions with different kinds of coercions, manipulations, persuasions, and cooperations.

Can we, with full awareness of the problem of choosing between conflicting values, each of which may be cherished, find some way of choosing the best planning process that is consonant with our belief in liberty? The function of planning is not only to set forth goals and alternatives and means of achieving these. Equally important, and usually neglected, are the specification of costs and benefits, the reallocation of burdens, and the probable consequences of different kinds of actions. The true function of the planning process is not to designate the most appropriate means for given ends, but to predict the possible consequences to explicate the values of a society and make people aware of the costs of achieving these.

Surprisingly, there are few studies extant of the planning process. There are some theoretical studies of how nations should plan and the principles of city planning, but few critical studies of how nations and groups actually plan and what can be done to improve both methods and procedures.

*2. The standardization of social indicators*

Over the past decades, economists have developed different series

of indicators to anticipate and evaluate trends in the economy. There may be differences in the conclusions drawn from time-series, but by and large there is a consensus of what should be observed.

One need not recapitulate here the obvious difficulties in establishing social and political indicators. Some of the difficulty arises from a failure to agree on what should be observed. Most of the writing on the new states, for example, concentrates on such general concepts as 'modernization' or 'political development' or 'new *élites*'; the dimensions, let alone the indicators, of the concept are still to be formulated.<sup>30</sup> But one of the consistent themes of the recent writings in modern sociology (cf. Aron, Parsons) is that 'industrial society' produces a series of common effects, has an 'internal logic' in its creation of a new occupational structure, and with the rise of affluence creates new, presumably common attitudes, despite differences in traditional culture.

The function of indicators is not to replace analysis or to act as predictors, but to allow comparisons over time within a country, and between countries, and – more important – to allow one to anticipate certain likely occurrences. It is only when the indicators and the concepts are relatively precise that we could hope that indicators would be predictive of specific events.

In rough ways, we tend to use certain indicators as predictive of events. We say that rising unemployment rates presage a swing to radical groups in voting, that migration rates may be coupled with crime and divorce rates, etc. But clearly the present need is for some coherent effort to create sets of social indicators dealing with social and political change.

Some beginning attempts have already been made. Some studies have shown that in the early stages of economic development demographic indicators (mortality data particularly) are quite predictive of rates of economic growth. Daniel Lerner, in his study of the Middle East, has used such items as literacy, exposure to mass media, and urbanization as indicators to modernization.<sup>31</sup> In an ambitious effort, Karl Deutsch has sought to create an inventory of basic trends in international politics, and to set up some indicators for social mobilization. (By social mobilization, Deutsch specifies a cluster of variables to indicate the entry of



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persons into a political system.)<sup>32</sup> Almond and his students have sought through opinion polls and other devices to trace the process whereby individuals in a number of countries move from being 'subjects' to becoming 'citizens', and to chart some rate of absorption.<sup>33</sup> Alex Inkeles and his associates are now engaged in an effort to trace the impact of industrialization on peasants entering the industrial process in a variety of different countries and to set up indicators of attitude change.<sup>34</sup>

Clearly any useful construction of alternative futures will depend upon the success of the compilation of such indicators.

### *3. Models of political structures*

The most difficult of all proposals is the heart of the social science enterprise itself, the construction of models of political systems.

The creation of a model allows us to do two (of a large number of) things. It may allow us to understand the 'value-relevance' of a statement; it may allow us to see whether a predicted change is one which simply affects the actors in a system (e.g. a shift of power between groups), or affects the nature of a system itself. To illustrate the two points:

A. From the standpoint of a Mohammedan, all Christians are alike. The involved theological disputes between Catholics and Protestants may have little meaning for him because both are 'children of Jesus'. To a Catholic, the differences between a 'hard-shell Baptist' and a Quaker may have little relevance for him since both are 'enthusiasts'. In a similar fashion, to a confirmed Marxist, the difference between a Democrat and a Republican in the American political system has little meaning, since both are capitalists. But to understand any analysis or criticism, one has to identify the standpoint from which it is made. One function of a model, therefore, is to indicate the value-relevance and level of analysis from the standpoint of the observer.

B. The analysis of power in a society can only be carried on adequately if one has a scheme to identify the relevant actors, the arena, the orientations of the actors, and their relationship to the underlying system which defines the politics of the society. By a system, I mean here the basis of renewable power independent of

any momentary group of actors. Most of political analysis today, I would argue, concentrates on the 'intermediate' sectors (e.g. parties, interest groups, the formal structure) or, as in the case of Soviet politics, through Kremlinology, to deal with the 'small units' of politics, but rarely is there an attempt to specify, as a Marxist analysis does, the underlying system of renewable power.

There are few operating models of political systems, on the descriptive or the analytical level, extant. Gabriel Almond and his associates have sought to establish a framework of concepts which would lead to the creation of such a model. Many years earlier, Harold Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan set forth comprehensive definitions of power, but they did not seek to combine these into a system. C. Wright Mills created a mechanistic image of a 'power élite'. Maurice Duverger, in his book *Political Parties*, at a lesser level has put forth a useful typology. Most recently, Raymond Aron, in his magisterial book, *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, has formulated certain models of diplomatic systems. But we still lack any comprehensive analyses of different systems of power.<sup>35</sup>

But here, in this entreaty, one comes full circle. For in the pre-occupation with prediction one risks the *hubris* of the historicist mode of thought which sees the future as 'pre-viewed' in some 'cunning of reason' or other determinist vision of human affairs. And this is false. One seeks 'pre-vision' as much to 'halt' a future as help it to come into being, for the function of prediction is not, as often stated, to aid social control, but to widen the spheres of moral choice. Without that normative commitment the social sciences become a mere technology rather than humanistic discipline.

#### NOTES

1. As Michael Polanyi has written: 'Prediction is not a regular attribute of scientific propositions. Kepler's laws and Darwinian theory predicted nothing. At any rate, successful prediction does not fundamentally change the status of a scientific proposition. It only adds a number of observations, the predicted observations, to our series of measurements . . .' *The Logic of Liberty*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951, p. 16.
2. For one of the most succinct analyses from the basis of modern economic theory, see Paul A. Samuelson, 'Wages and Interest: A



- Modern Dissection of Marxian Economic Models', *American Economic Review*, December 1957, pp. 884-912.
3. See Ridenour, Shaw, and Hill, *Bibliography in an Age of Science*, University of Illinois Press, 1951; and Derek Price, *Science Since Babylon*, Yale University Press, 1961, and *Little Science, Big Science*, Columbia University Press, 1963. See also 'Scientific Research and Scholarship: Notes Towards the Design of Proper Scales', *Daedalus*, March 1962, pp. 362-99.
  4. These quotations are from *Little Science, Big Science*, pp. 24, 25, 30.
  5. See Herbert A. Simon, *Models of Man*, Wiley, New York, 1957, pp. 97, 145-64.
  6. The following description by Paul Levy explains the concept: 'The idea of a stochastic process is, at least for a determinist, tied to that of the existence of hidden parameters which do not intervene in the description of the apparent present state of the system studied and which nevertheless influence its future evolution. Our ignorance of their values forces us to speak for the future only of a set of possible evolutions, and in certain cases we can define in that set a law of probability incessantly modified by the knowledge of new data.' Cited in Lucienne Félix, *The Modern Aspect of Mathematics*, Science Editions, New York, 1961, pp. 132-3.
  7. A representative work is Amos Hawley, *Human Ecology*, Ronald Press Co., New York, 1950. A recent, imaginative effort to use the ecological approach in a holistic way is Clifford Geertz's *Agricultural Involution: The Processes of Ecological Change in Indonesia*, University of California Press, 1963.
  8. I leave aside here the problem of the failures of short-run predictions or stages theory as involving many complicated considerations. But a study of why many of these predictions went wrong would be fruitful. For example, Frank Notestein posited a stages theory which powerfully influenced David Riesman in the formulation of the theory of character change in the latter's *The Lonely Crowd*. The Notestein theory, metaphorically, is an S-shaped curve. The bottom horizontal line represents traditional societies with high birth rates but also high death rates; a second stage, that of transitional growth (the sigmoid rise), is one of population explosion because of a rapidly declining death rate; the third stage is one of incipient population decline based on a new stabilization of low birth rate and low death rate. Riesman associated the traditional type with the first society, the inner-directed type with the second, and the other-directed type with the third. But the stages theory has been proven wrong. Both France and the United States, for example, have recently resumed a steady population rise, but for how long, it is difficult to say. For the original Notestein formulation, see Frank Notestein, 'Population - The Long View', in T. W. Schultz (ed.), *Food for the World*, University of Chicago Press, 1945. For Riesman's discussion of his abandonment of the Notestein hypothesis as the basis for his own theory see 'The Lonely Crowd: A Reconsideration in 1960', S. M. Lipset

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- and Leo Lowenthal (eds.), *Culture and Social Character*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1961, pp. 419-58.
9. See Sir Charles Darwin, 'Forecasting the Future', in Edward Hutchings, Jr (ed.), *Frontiers in Science*, Basic Books, New York, 1958, p. 116. See too, in the same volume, the report by Fred Hoyle.
  10. For a balanced assessment of this problem, see S. Lilley, 'Can Prediction Become a Science?' in *Discovery*, November 1946; reprinted in Bernard Barber and Walter Hirsch (eds.), *The Sociology of Science*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1962. A quick review of different kinds of trend predictions can be found in Hornell Hart, 'Predicting Future Trends', in Allen, Hart, et al. (eds.), *Technology and Social Change*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1957, chapter 19.
  11. See G. Dupeux, 'Electoral Behaviour', *Current Sociology* (1954-5), pp. 318-44, and S. M. Lipset, P. F. Lazarsfeld, et al., 'The Psychology of Voting', in Gardner Lindzey (ed.), *Hand-book of Social Psychology*, Addison-Wesley, Cambridge, 1954; Simon, op. cit., chapter 5; and Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, *Voting*, University of Chicago Press, 1954, especially chapter 13.
  12. Colin Clark, 'Apropos the Eight Million of M. Manshold', *Futuribles* papers, Paris, no. 18.
  13. See the classic essay in this field by Robert Merton, 'Social Structure and Anomie', in his *Social Theory and Social Structure*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1957, chapter IV.
  14. See *The Operational Code of the Politburo*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1951; *A Study of Bolshevism*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1954; also, with Constantin Melnik, *The House Without Windows: France Selects a President*, Row Peterson, Evanston, 1958, and *On the Game of Politics in France*, Stanford, 1959. For a detailed discussion of the validity of this approach, see my essay 'Ten Theories in Search of Reality: The Prediction of Soviet Behavior', in *The End of Ideology*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1960.
  15. There have been many efforts to identify an American 'style'. See, for example, the essay by W. W. Rostow in Elting Morison (ed.), *The American Style*, Harper, New York, 1958, pp. 246-313; D. W. Brogan, 'The Illusion of American Omnipotence', *Harper's*, December 1952; Daniel Bell, 'The National Style and the Radical Right', *Partisan Review*, Fall 1962; Talcott Parsons and Winston White, 'The Link Between Character and Society', in *Culture and Social Character*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1961, chapter 6. A fruitful comparison of aspects of British and American patterns can be found in Edward A. Shils, *The Torment of Secrecy*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, chapter 2. For a denial of direct links between cultural values and social structure, see E. R. Leach, *The Political System of Highland Burma*, Bell (London School of Economics publication), 1954.
  16. K. Marx, *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, II, p. 423.



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17. See Almond and Coleman, *The Politics of the Developing Areas*, Princeton University Press, 1960, p. 59; also by David Apter, 'A Comparative Method for the Study of Politics', *American Journal of Sociology*, LXIV, 3, November 1958, pp. 221-37, and Aberle, Cohen, *et al.*, 'The Functional Prerequisites of a Society', *Ethics*, LX, 2, January 1950, pp. 100-111.
18. One such typology, on which Almond bases part of his system, is that of Edward Shils, from *Political Development in the New States*, Mouton and Company, The Hague, 1962.
19. See *Terror and Progress USSR*, Harvard University Press, 1954.
20. Edward F. Denison, *The Sources of Economic Growth in the U.S.*, Committee for Economic Development, 1963.
21. In *Futuribles, I*, Droz, Geneva, 1963, pp. 295-319.
22. Lucy Mair, *New Nations*, University of Chicago Press, 1963.
23. See K. D. Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimar Republik*, Ring Verlag, Stuttgart, 1957.
24. Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War*, Princeton University Press, 1960, especially chapters IX, X; and 'Deterrence and Defense in the Sixties and Seventies', *Progress Report for a Study of Crises and Arms Control*, Hudson Institute (unpublished), chapter II.
25. Apter, *op. cit.*, p. 221.
26. See Talcott Parsons, *Structure and Process in Modern Societies*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1960, especially chapters 2 and 3.
27. In *Futuribles, I*, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-54.
28. For the details, see Herman Kahn, 'Alternative World Futures', paper HI-342-B IV, Hudson Institute, April 1964.
29. Harold Guetzkow has edited two volumes on simulation: *Simulation in Social Science: Readings*, and *Simulation in International Relations*, both published by Prentice-Hall, 1962, 1963. A useful volume on decision theory which argues that one can verify ethical judgements is C. West Churchman, *Prediction and Optimal Decision*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1961.
30. On indicators, see Paul F. Lazarsfeld, 'Evidence and Inference in Social Research', in Daniel Lerner (ed.), *Evidence and Inference*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1959.
31. See Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, Free Press of Glencoe, New York, 1958, especially chapter II.
32. See Karl Deutsch, 'Toward an Inventory of Basic Trends and Patterns in Comparative and International Politics', *American Political Science Review*, March 1960; and 'Social Mobilization and Political Development', *ibid.*, September 1961, pp. 463-515.
33. The results of these studies in Germany, Italy, Mexico, Great Britain, and the United States are summed up in the volume *The Civic Culture*, by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, Princeton University Press, 1963.
34. This work is going on in Chile, Nigeria, and Pakistan. A preliminary statement can be found in Alex Inkeles, 'Industrial Man: The Relation

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of Status to Experience, Perception and Value', *The American Journal of Sociology*, LXVI, 1, July 1960, pp. 1-31.

35. The best recent effort to create a typology of the new States is the monograph by Edward Shils, *Political Development in the New States*. This study charts the alternative courses of critical development (e.g. tutelary democracy, modernizing oligarchies), but does not specify the bases of power, or the social systems of renewable power. The beautiful simplicity of the Marxist scheme is that it took a single variable, wealth in property, or the means of production, as the basis of power. We lack some organizing concepts which will allow us to group the multiple bases of power which now exist in the world into a comprehensive classification or a system-set.



# Prolegomena to the Study of British Kinship

Robin Fox

There has hitherto existed a state of quiet schizophrenia in the social sciences over the study of 'kinship' in Britain. The study of kinship has been traditionally the preserve of the social anthropologist, and so the sociologists have tended to regard it as an exotic mystery and have left it more or less alone. Anthropologists, however, have not been very interested in industrial societies, so that the study of British kinship has been neglected. Marriage; divorce; the family; adoption; households – all these have been given a fair treatment, but kinship in the wider sense was left to languish. Indeed it became a firmly held sociological myth that there was no kinship in Britain. The only unit of interest was the nuclear family (consisting only of father, mother, and their children) – or rather the break-up of the nuclear family; wider ties and other types of kinship grouping were denied.

Sociology has of late gone through a demythologizing process, however, and recent studies have shown that kinship beyond the family level is still important, although no one would want to claim that it has an overriding importance. This change of heart amongst the sociologists has coincided with a change of interest in anthropology. Kinship studies in anthropology had previously been concerned almost exclusively with a type of kinship system very unlike our own. More recently, the anthropologists have swung round to being interested in our type of kinship. Previously they had concentrated on *unilineal* kinship systems. In these, one 'line' – either the male or the female – is chosen for the purpose of reckoning kinship between persons. (Thus kinship is said to be either 'matrilineal' – traced through mothers, or 'patrilineal' traced through fathers.) The word unilineal is a little clumsy: what in fact is meant is *unisexual* reckoning. Thus one sex is ignored for purposes of reckoning kin. In our own system, however, sex is usually ignored altogether. Thus I am equally related to another person whether this be 'through' a male or a female link or links.

This type of reckoning is usually called *bilateral*, or *cognatic* – the latter being the more expressive and precise word and the one I shall use. (Appalling, and erroneous, terms like ‘multilineal’ and ‘omnilineal’ are best forgotten.) Cognatic kinship reckoning then is asexual: it takes no note of sex. This appears to us to be ‘normal’ of course, as it is the method we use. But over a large part of the globe it would be regarded as decidedly odd, and for anthropology, too, it has been the odd man out. Thus cognatic systems have usually been seen as ‘weakly developed’ unilineal types; stressing in a vague sort of way the male or female line, but never quite becoming the real thing.

The reformed view of cognatic systems, as something more than weak deviations from the unilineal principle, has interesting implications. It should mean that, if the anthropologists are now going to analyse cognatic kinship with all the skill they have previously devoted to unilineal kinship, then a good deal of light will be shed on our own system. Two things, however, stand in the way of such welcome illumination. One is the still confused state of kinship analysis, and the other is the non-tribal nature of our society.

I will have to develop and explain the impertinent suggestion that the study of kinship – high point of anthropological achievement – is in a state of confusion. I will then have to attempt to restore it to some sort of order. If we are not clear in our analysis of kinship in general then we will make no headway with cognatic kinship and kinship in Britain in particular. The point about our non-tribal nature I will take up in a later section.

The confusion is partly a result of knowing too much. Terms and distinctions have multiplied, and each new discovery is blessed with yet another term culled from the Latin, while not enough thought is given to the basis on which distinctions are being made. We must therefore look at some of the distinctions, observe the resulting confusions, and try to search for the underlying categories which will resolve the confusions. It will be a complicated road to follow, but the journey is necessary before we can arrive at an analysis of British kinship proper.

We can quickly dispose of one very basic distinction. You will remember that we distinguished earlier between two types



of kinship system on the basis of the method of 'reckoning' kin. That is, the focus of our interest was on how people classified or categorized their kinsfolk. How did they decide who was and who was not a kinsman? We saw how they could either plunge for the male or female link, or that they could ignore sex and trace through links of either sex. Anthropologists, however, have not only been interested in this classifying process, but in what societies do with it. One thing they do is to use it as a basis of *recruitment* to groups who work together, worship together, or unite for mutual aid against outsiders. Classification produces categories; recruitment produces groups. Therefore, when talking of a kinship system, we should be careful to make clear whether we are talking of the system of classification or the system of recruitment, or both. For example, as we have seen, one can have a rule that only a man's *agnates* – relatives traced through males exclusively – are his 'kin' for various purposes. But all the agnates so classified need not necessarily form a *group* in the sociological sense. They may interact with each other, but they do not need to have any degree of 'corporateness' – that is, act as a body. On the other hand, one could use this agnatic principle for recruitment purposes. Groups of agnates, possibly the descendants of a common ancestor in each case, could form highly corporate bodies of kin – hold property, worship ancestors, and so on.

These alternatives lead to different but complementary approaches to kinship analysis. One asks, 'Who is counted as being kin to whom and how do they interact?' The other asks, 'What kind of kinship groups are there and how are they recruited?' A failure to recognize this seemingly obvious difference leads to confusion.

The next distinction to note is the one we have mentioned as dominating anthropological thinking on the subject, namely, that between unilineal and cognatic classification, and recruitment. This distinction is enshrined in Roman Law, on which anthropologists have drawn heavily in their search for concepts. Relatives in Rome were divided into the *cognati* (those related through males or females) and the *agnati* (those related through males only). If any *ego* (as the focal person in kinship analysis is rather tediously called) ran out of agnates, then cognates up to a certain

degree became eligible, for example, as heirs. But note that the kinship *group* in Rome was the *gens*, a group of agnates bearing the same surname and presumably descended from the same ancestor. The *cognati* were simply a category of relatives, and the cognatic principle was not used in recruitment. This is worth stressing because it shows that the distinction between unilineal and cognatic kinship is not absolute with reference to societies. Many societies recognize cognates as relatives for some purposes but utilize the unilineal principle alone when recruiting kinship groups. Thus, a recognition of the difference between recruitment and classification (although these of course often coincide) enables one to see that the unilineal-cognatic distinction does not ruthlessly mark off one type of society from another.

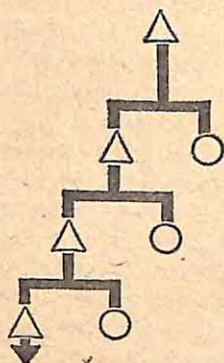
The anthropological obsession with unilineal kinship is understandable. At the group level of analysis unilineal recruitment has certain attractive advantages that have appealed to the orderly brains of structural anthropologists. For example, it assigns individuals unambiguously to one group (father's or mother's), and so produces discrete groupings which can perpetuate themselves over time. These groups are non-overlapping: this is their great advantage. An individual is a member of one and one only, and each *lineage* – a group of people claiming descent from a common ancestor – is distinct from every other lineage (Diagram 1). Now on the face of it cognatic systems cannot achieve the same precision. They look decidedly untidy at the side of unilineal systems. In a cognatic system, it seems, groups *must* overlap. If the cognatic method is used for recruitment purposes then ego is equally a member of mother's *and* father's group, and, if he continues to trace relationship through any link, then there is no end – theoretically – to the number of groups of which he can be a member.

But this must still be puzzling unless we try to find out the nature of these cognatic *groups*. It is over this very issue that confusion reigns at the moment, and the confusion rests on the failure to make yet another distinction – that between groups relative to an *ancestor*, and groups relative to an *ego* – that is, to a particular living individual.<sup>1</sup> Of groups based on cognatic recruitment and relative to ego, the best known is probably the *kindred* (Diagram 2). Here, ego's relatives are reckoned, for example, up to a certain

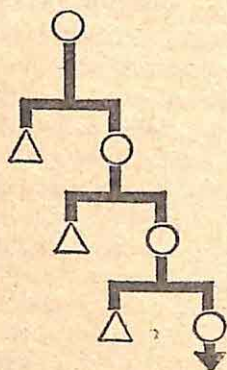


1.

## Patrilineal lineage



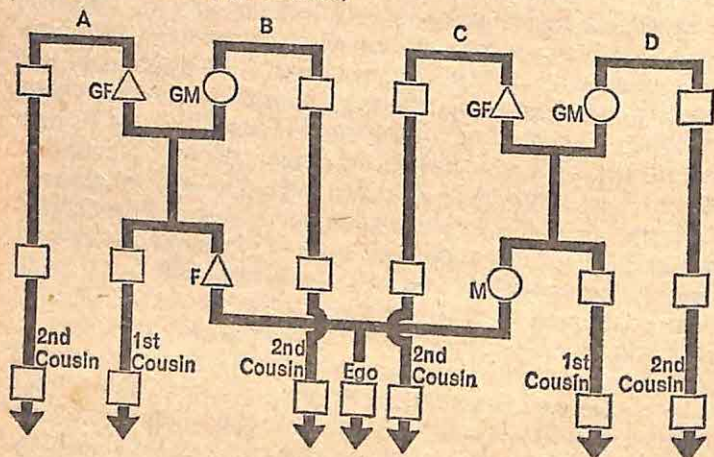
## Matrililineal lineage



△ = males  
○ = females  
| = descent

└ = siblings  
↓ = continuing line of descent

## 2. Cognatic kindred (ego-focused)



△ = males  
○ = females  
□ = either sex  
M = mother

GF = grandfather  
GM = grandmother  
F = father

↓ = continuing line of descent

└ = marriage  
| = descent  
└ = siblings

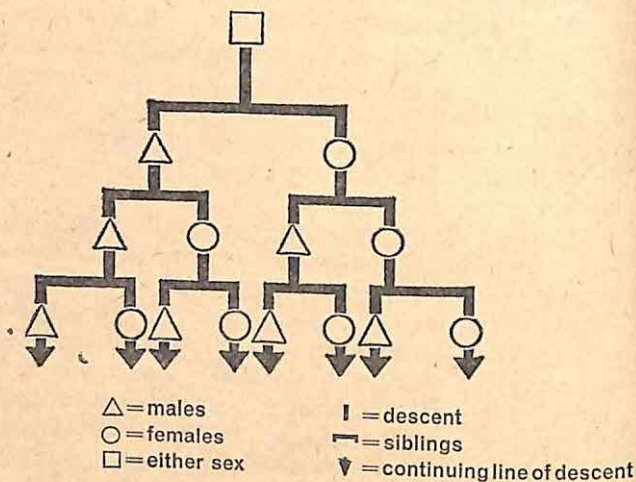
degree of cousinship. Thus all his relatives up to second cousins may constitute his kindred. Alternatively this may be phrased as all the descendants of his four pairs of great-grandparents. Now in such a system each ego is the focus of his own kindred, and the total system would consist of as many overlapping kindreds as there were egos. No two people (except siblings) would have the same kindred. Thus I and my first cousins would have different total kindreds, although we are members of each other's kindreds.

Now in this type of system each ego is the focus of his own group. It is relative to him: it does not survive his death. In most unilineal societies this is not the case. The group here – the lineage – is not relative to any particular living individual but to an ancestor – alive or dead. Thus, all the descendants of an ancestor in the male line constitute a *patrilineage*: in the female a *matrilineage*. This ancestor is fixed in time, and the group consists of his descendants decided upon by one or other principle of recruitment. It is not a group relative to a living ego in any sense. When any member dies, the group still exists and continues. This difference in focus is crucial, and traditionally it has been associated with the supposedly fundamental difference of unilineal versus cognatic. But it is easy to see that the principle of ancestor focus could apply in a cognatic system too. There could be a lineage consisting of *all* the descendants of an ancestor – not just those in the male or female line (Diagram 3). This would be a system employing the cognatic principle, like the kindred, but focused on an ancestor, like the unilineal lineage. The current problem, then, is how to classify and hence analyse these cognatic lineages which undoubtedly exist. Should the 'lineality' dominate our considerations so that they are classified with other ancestor-focused groups like unilineal lineages? Or should the fact that they employ the cognatic principle be foremost and lead us to class them with kindreds? They share relativity to an ancestor with unilineal lineages, but cognatic recruitment with kindreds. Certainly, then, like the latter, they would overlap in membership and ego would be a member of as many cognatic lineages as he had lineal ancestors (Diagram 4).

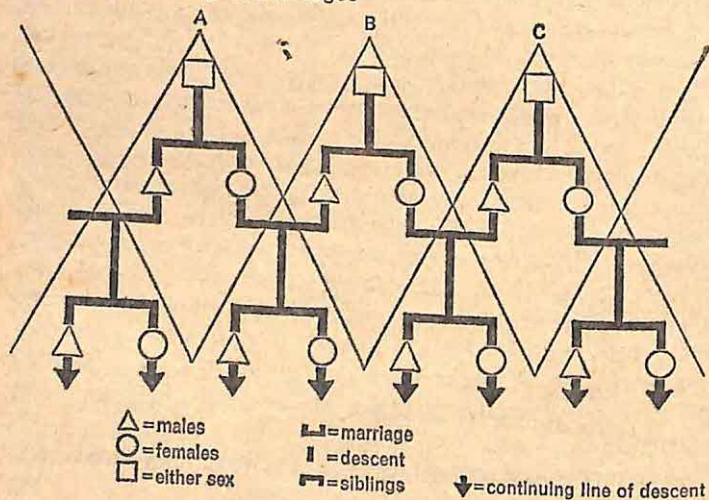
Anthropological theory has made the distinction between 'uni-



### 3. Cognatic lineage (ancestor-focused)



### 4. Overlapping of cognatic lineages



lineal' and 'cognatic' so absolute that such a problem becomes unavoidable. It may be, however, that this is the wrong distinction. We will perhaps have to rethink our basic categories. But before we do this, let us look at a problem posed by the literature on cognatic kinship to see the kind of confusion that occurs.

I will take as an example an essay which claims to solve the problem. J. D. Freeman<sup>2</sup> makes the notion of a *stock* basic to his definition of the kindred. You will remember how we defined the kindred in terms of cousinship, but said that alternatively it could be phrased as the descendants of ego's great-grandparents, great-great-grandparents, etc. Now a stock is all the descendants of a pair of married persons. Thus a kindred of 'four stocks' would consist of all the descendants of ego's great-grandparents. There would be four groups of these – one group descended from each of the four pairs of great-grandparents (A, B, C, and D in Diagram 2). Ego would of course be a member of each stock, and the four stocks together would constitute this kindred. This is in fact the way that some societies – though not all by any means – explain and reckon the kindred.

Later in his essay Freeman discusses the concept of the cognatic lineage as described by Goodenough.<sup>1</sup> He doubts that such groups could exist. The fact that they would endlessly overlap – like the stocks in the kindred system – means that they could never function in a way analogous to the lineages in a unilineal system. When looked at more closely, he suggests, they will turn out to be some kind of patrilineal grouping.

Bearing this in mind, we turn to an influential symposium on cognatic kinship and find Solien<sup>3</sup> telling us that (a) Goodenough has clearly distinguished cognatic lineages from kindreds, and that (b) Radcliffe-Brown<sup>4</sup> describes the system of stocks among the Teutons, he is describing a species of cognatic lineage. The Teutons are supposed to have had the most elaborate kindred system yet discovered.

Clearly there is a confusion here. Are stocks cognatic lineages or are they not? Solien thinks they are and hence a kindred would be composed of cognatic lineages. Freeman doubts the existence of cognatic lineages but insists that the kindred is composed of



stocks! From here on the confusions multiply, but only the scholastically minded would derive any pleasure from following them.

We can solve the problem, I think, by a reference back to Goodenough's notion of *focus*. Although both stocks and cognatic lineages are technically composed of all the descendants of an ancestor (or married pair), stocks do not exist independently of ego, while cognatic lineages do. Stocks are, by definition, relative to an ego; lineages – of whatever breed – are relative to an ancestor. This ancestor is fixed: he is constant. The lineage consists of all his descendants. The 'ancestors' of the stock (e.g. great-grandparents) are decided upon *purely with reference to ego*. Ego's children will belong to a slightly different stock group springing from *their* four great-grandparents, two of whom will be in common with ego. In the lineage system the members are incorporated into the lineage of the ancestor. In the stock system the ancestors are incorporated into ego's kindred. Thus the descendants of each pair of great-great-grandparents are technically a cognatic lineage, but are not ancestor-focused: they do not stem from a constant ancestor fixed in time. A stock, as we saw earlier, is an *ad hoc* grouping called into existence by an ego's invocation of cousinship up to a certain degree.

In the cognatic lineage the ancestor is fixed *without any reference to ego*. Ego simply becomes a member of the group stemming from the ancestor, not, as with the kindred, the focus of his own personal group. Technically, in 'unrestricted' cognatic lineage systems – that is, those in which *all* the members of the ultimate ancestor are in fact members of his lineage – ego will be a member of several such lineages. But these lineages need not be of the same genealogical depth. This will depend on how many generations back they were founded. Nothing could contrast more with a stock in a kindred system. It is possible to have a 'restricted' system in which ego must choose one of the lineages of which he is a potential member and affiliate with it to the exclusion of the others. This would in fact produce discrete groups as with unilineal lineages, but it introduces the factor of choice and decision on ego's part. In a unilineal system he has no choice. In the technically unrestricted system ego can often retain rights in all the lineages of

which he is a member while only activating rights in a small number. This produces much the same effect in practice as a restricted system, but is yet more flexible (see Firth<sup>5</sup>).

Thus, although they share the cognatic principle of recruitment, stocks and cognatic lineages can be distinguished in terms of ego-versus ancestor-focus respectively. Of course, in an unrestricted cognatic lineage system, ego will be a member of several such lineages and he will be the focal point of a possibly unique combination of these. This constellation will have the look of a 'kindred' but is really radically different, as each lineage is an independent entity existing in its own right – quite unlike a stock.

\*

What I think we learn from this rather arid discussion of a technical point is that unidimensional classifications of kinship systems or aspects of such systems are not much use. We have seen some of these classifications overt or implied.

recruitment	:	classification
group	:	category
corporation	:	interaction
unilineal	:	cognatic
ancestor	:	ego
restricted	:	unrestricted

others would include, for example:

segmentary	:	non-segmentary
a-symmetrical	:	symmetrical

and so on.

Not all of these have been previously recognized, but, as we have seen, they have been implied in previous analysis. The trouble with this has been that systems or groups, as types, have been assigned in an either/or fashion along one or other of these dimensions, and it has been thought – not necessarily consciously – that there was some kind of logical link between the categories in each column. But this clearly does not work. There is not a clear contrast between the left- and right-hand columns; that is, between unilineally restricted ancestor-focused corporate groups on the one hand, and cognatic unrestricted ego-focused categories of interacting kin on the other. The cognatic lineage straddles this



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divide, and so does what has been called the 'skewed' or asymmetrical kindred. This is an ego-focused group but it recruits *through one sex only*. Thus ego's kindred would consist of, say, relatives up to third cousins, but traced only through males. This combines ego-focus with unisexual recruitment and so is in a sense the logical opposite of the cognatic lineage which combines ancestor-focus with asexual recruitment.

What this urges upon us is the need for at least a two-dimensional classificatory system. I will make a start by taking what seem to me to be the two most basic factors of those listed: those which generate the others. These are focus and recruitment. Let us take recruitment first. Under this can be subsumed the restricted-unrestricted dimension, that is, recruitment to groups can either be unrestricted or it can have some conditions. The best known of these is the sex limitation; that is, unisexual recruitment may be imposed. This takes care of the unilineal-cognatic dimension. ('Unrestricted' is synonymous with asexual or cognatic.) If there are not sexual conditions, then some other consideration may limit recruitment, such as an insistence on residence with members of the group. As to focus, if the group is focused at all then it will be on either ego or ancestor. Faith in binary opposition leads me to put in the category of 'unfocused' although the logic of this baffles me at the moment. We may see a use for it later however.

The following table should make this two-dimensional classification clear.

Recruitment \ Focus	Focus		Unfocused
	Ego	Ancestor	
Unrestricted	1	2	3
Restricted	Sex	5	6
	Other	8	9

(By choosing recruitment we are committed here to a classification of groups. To turn this into a classification of categories, simply substitute 'method of reckoning kinship' for 'recruitment'.)

Examples of kinship systems from some of the cells are as follows (but note that not all the cells need be filled):

Cell 1: Symmetrical kindreds

Cell 2: Cognatic lineages

Cell 4: A-symmetrical kindreds (unisexual recruitment)

Cell 5: Unilineal lineages

Cell 8: Restricted cognatic lineages

The 'sex' category should be subdivided into male and female to give the full constellation of types – that is to include matrilineal and patrilineal lineages. But at the level at which we are working this is not one of the more significant distinctions. For some of the cells, no. 7 for example, I can find no ready-made example, but this does not matter. It is not inconceivable that there may be some possible kinship systems that have never been tried, and it might be more instructive to turn our attention to the empty cells rather than to the full ones. They present interesting limiting cases and the question as to why they have not been tried may help to answer questions about why the others have.

I would not claim that this is in any sense a definitive way of classifying kin groups. In some respects it is clumsy and it may well be that I have not chosen the 'true' factors on which anthropologists are working when making their classificatory decisions. But as a method I feel it is an advance on thinking up new Latin tags for each new empirical discovery. All I want to stress at the moment is that this is a classification of groups and their concomitant categories, not a classification of societies. These groups can coexist in various combinations within the same society, and many examples of this are known.

We are now equipped, I hope, to ask some more penetrating questions about British kinship than might have been possible before. We know, for example, that simply to say that our 'kinship system' is 'cognatic' is not very helpful. We have to ask whether this simply refers to our method of classifying kin (with whom we



may interact) or whether we use the cognatic principle in the recruitment of groups. Most studies of kinship in Britain take the first approach, largely because investigators feel that there are not any kinship groups of any significance anyway. This is to beg the question. Kinship groups may not be of the first importance, but if they exist then we cannot ignore them in a study of kinship. As to classification, however, it is easy to see that we follow a variety of principles for a variety of purposes – inheritance, succession, surnames, and so on. However, in none of these cases is membership in a kinship group necessarily involved. Cognatic descendants of a man may make claims on his estate if he dies without making a will, but these cognates need not form a group – a cognatic lineage.

I should stress that the kinship groups I see existing in our society are not formally or necessarily jurally recognized, nor are they universal. And this brings us back to the problem of the place of kinship in non-tribal industrial societies. Ours is not a 'kinship-articulated' society. The 'basic' groups in our society are not extended kinship groups. What is more there are no rules of membership for kinship groups which apply universally to everyone. We may or may not belong to an extended kinship group (one wider than the nuclear family), but this is a matter of choice or circumstance. Nothing could contrast more markedly with the tribal situation in which the tribe is *composed of* kinship groups (or at least groups recruited by kinship), of which every one is automatically a member by birth. It is this that makes it impossible to talk of *the* kinship system in our society as though this were directly comparable with the kinship system of a tribe.

We can push this home by considering the problem of overlapping that is supposed to characterize unrestricted cognatic systems. If I *must* belong to the kin groups of both father and mother, all grandparents, etc., then there can be no discrete groups. But this assumes that the society is composed of kin groups to which everyone must belong; and our society is not. Therefore membership in one group – despite our 'bilaterality' – need not conflict with membership in another. The kin group I join through my father may not be rivalled by a similar one on my mother's side. Even if it is, the two groups may exist for very different

purposes and therefore not compete for my membership. Such a situation would be impossible in a system of cognatic lineages where competition for membership must often be intense.

This example assumes that the units of such groups would be individuals, but (as Goodenough has insisted) this is not always the case and, in a society which stresses the nuclear family as much as ours, it is these families rather than individuals which are the units of groups. It would therefore be quite possible to have a group composed of nuclear families which did not overlap with any other group and was therefore discrete. As with a unilineal lineage the group would not be relative to a particular ego and it would be discrete. Unlike a unilineal lineage it would not be focused on an ancestor and would not, without difficulty, perpetuate itself over time. It would not, in fact, be focused on anyone at all. Thus, out of the blue, or rather out of British kinship, we get a group that fits our category of 'unfocused-unrestricted', or even 'unfocused-restricted by some condition other than sex': cells 3 and 9 of our table. Such cells would have been a constant puzzle while we stuck to tribal kinship, but it is possible to fill them when we move to societies where kinship groups are not universal, and hence these 'free floating', unfocused groups can happily exist. It would be impossible to have a society *composed of* such groups. But they can float about freely in a society that is not. In communities where they did overlap – that is where a nuclear family might find itself a member of two such groups – then as long as they existed for different purposes they would only compete for the *time* that the family could devote to each. An example I know of this is two such groups with a nuclear family in common, one of which combines to run a football-pool syndicate and another which organizes a whist circle within itself. These purposes are pretty distinct.

Cognatic descent groups are quite common with our society. Sometimes these are highly self-conscious like Scottish clan associations or Jewish descent groups in New York (see Mitchell<sup>6</sup>). They crop up in noble and famous families, where the stress is likely to be on the bearers of the name, but over a long period 'connexions' with the main branch through links of both sexes will be kept up (see Lancaster<sup>7</sup>). Similar groups of usually more



shallow depth occur in family businesses. Spouses tend to get incorporated into these groups but need not.

All the above are fairly permanent non-ego-relative groups. If we turn to groups which are relative to ego we are left with purely ceremonial groups – what Firth has called ‘occasional kin groups’. The type of group will be determined by ego’s position in the life cycle. During his early years, for his christening and birthdays, etc., he will be surrounded by a personal cognatic kindred – the ‘relatives’ of his mother and father. This is rather a ragged affair and hardly deserves the name kindred, as it has no formal structure. But it is of the kindred type. His wedding will unite two such kindreds – and these in turn will become the kindred of his child and will assemble at his child’s christening, etc. As he proceeds through life he will accumulate descendants, and at his silver and golden wedding anniversaries and at his funeral these personal descendants – his own cognatic lineage as it were – will form the core of celebrants, if not the only ones. This lineage is not a permanent affair: it will not survive his death, as it only functions as a group to celebrate points in his life cycle. Evidence for these ceremonial groups tied to the individual’s life cycle are not hard to come by. Pictures of them with details appear regularly in the local Press.

I have stated the above rather baldly, but of course the same proviso applies to these personal ceremonial groups as to any other kinship groups in our society – an individual need not have them.

I hope the reader will feel justified in having ploughed through a revision of anthropological theory in order to arrive at some tame conclusions about British kinship. I can only hope I have got across the point that kinship theory as it stood left us little room for manoeuvre in analysing a non-tribal kinship system. So firm had the distinction between unilineal and cognatic kinship become that anthropologists could do little more than say that our kinship system was cognatic and class us with the Eskimo! As I hope the rather tedious discussion of stocks and lineages showed, the sacred distinction was in many ways a stumbling block, and one had to search for other and more basic factors and leave behind a uni-dimensional approach. I feel the scheme that finally emerged

represents an advance, in that it incorporates previous categories and yet does not leave us with the paradoxes that were inherent in them. Add to this the notions that we are non-tribal and lack universal kin groups, and that more than one kin group can exist within a system, and the way is open for a richer analysis of our own kinship system. The 'truths' we discover are, after all, a result of the concepts we use.

NOTES

1. Goodenough, W. H., 'A Problem in Malayo-Polynesian Social Organization', *American Anthropologist*, vol. 57, 1955, pp. 71-83.
2. Freeman, J. D., 'On the Concept of the Kindred', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 91, 1961, part 2.
3. Solien, N. L., 'The Non-unilineal Descent Group in the Caribbean and Central America', *American Anthropologist*, vol. 61, no. 4, 1959.
4. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., Introduction to *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde (eds.), Oxford University Press, 1950.
5. Firth, R., 'Bilateral Descent Groups: An Operational Viewpoint', in I. Schapera (ed.), *Studies in Kinship and Marriage*, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1964.
6. Mitchell, W. E., 'Descent Groups among New York City Jews', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. III, no. 1, 1961.
7. Lancaster, L., 'Some Conceptual Problems in the Study of Family and Kin Ties in the British Isles', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. XII, no. 4, 1961.



# A Socio-linguistic Approach to Social Learning

Basil Bernstein

This paper is concerned with: (1) the neglect of the study of speech by sociologists; (2) the role of speech as a major aspect of culture, and the means of its transmission; (3) the relations between forms of speech and forms of social relation; (4) the social and educational consequences of differential access to forms of speech. The reader may well think that the early discussion bears little relation to education. It is important, however, although the argument is a complex one.

Perhaps one of the most important events that has taken place in scientific endeavour in the twentieth century is the convergence of both the natural and social sciences upon the study of linguistic aspects of communication. The consequences of this convergence and the new relations between the disciplines which it has brought about may well be worthy of a chapter in the next book on the sociology of knowledge. Through the study of language the link between biological and socio-cultural orders is gradually being established. The clarification of this link and the resultant theories may well have consequences for control as exciting as the progress in our understanding of the genetic code. This is not the place to discuss the trends in separate disciplines which have led to this convergence, but a number of works may serve as guides for the reader.<sup>1</sup> What is a little odd is the negligible contribution of sociology to the study of language. The textbooks celebrate the fact of man's symbolic possibilities in chapters on culture and socialization and then the consequences are systematically ignored. One might go as far as saying that the only time one is made aware that humans speak in the writings of contemporary sociologists is, incidentally, through the statistical relations induced from social-survey inquiries.\* And here all that is required is that the subjects

\* There are, of course exceptions, for example, Schatzman, L., and Strauss A. L., 'Social Class and Modes of Communication', *American Journal of*

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can read: speech confounds the later arithmetic. Even when what a person says is considered to be relevant, what is actually said is rarely, in itself, singled out as worthy of systematic study. The origins and consequences of forms of saying, linguistic forms, their conditions, formal patterning, regulative functions, their history and change are not included in the sociologist's analysis. And yet long ago both Durkheim and Weber drew attention to the social significance of language.

In its struggle for recognition, sociology has continuously insisted upon the fact that there exists an order of relations arising out of the interactions of members of a society, which constrains and directs behaviour independent of the unique characteristics of its members. Sociologists have been concerned to explain the nature of this order, in particular the processes making for its diversity and change, and develop to a formal level a grammar or syntax which controls the conceptualizing of this order. They have studied the major complexes of social forms which shape the social order, their interrelations, and the factors responsible for their change. Language is seen as an integrating or divisive phenomenon; as the major process through which a culture is transmitted; the bearer of the social genes. However, this has rarely given rise to a study of language as a social institution comparable to the analyses made of say the family, religion, etc. As far as speech is concerned this has been viewed as a datum, taken for granted, and not as an object of special inquiry. It is, of course, true that through the writings of George Mead the role of language, really the role of speech, has been explicitly recognized in the formation of a distinctly social self. And yet, in the study of socialization, it is not possible to find an empirical study which systematically examines the role of speech as the process by which a child comes to acquire a specific *social* identity. In fact in the numerous studies of child-rearing, with the exception of very few, there is no account of the patterning of the linguistic environment.\* Groups are studied, their formal ordering elegantly discussed, but

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*Sociology*, 60, 1955, pp. 329-38; Bossard, J. H. S., 'Family Modes of Expression', *American Sociological Review*, 1945, pp. 226-37.

\* I am ignoring here the many studies limited to the development of speech in children.



the implications and consequences of *linguistic* aspects of their communications seem to be unworthy of sociological consideration. Graduates are trained to conduct surveys, to construct questionnaires, to interview, without (at least, in England) any explicit and systematic training in what Dell Hymes has called the ethnography of speech – although there is an intuitive or unsystematic recognition of differences in the patterning and consequences of speech events in various sub-cultures.

Sociologists, who focus upon social dynamics as these are expressed through changes in the major institutional forms, have thrown a shadow on problems implicit in the work of the great nineteenth-century theorists. Weber, for example, discusses various types of rationality and their associated institutional orders and forms of authority. Complex societies involve various forms of rationality which may be differentially distributed among their members. Weber's typology of rationality bears some resemblance to cultural themes which determine modes of action. How does an individual come to acquire a particular form of rationality? Weber's concept of rationality requires an explicit formulation of the interrelations between institutional and cultural orders *and* of the process whereby individual experience manifests itself in special modes of social action. Durkheim's analysis of the origins and consequences of mechanical and organic solidarity presuppose the same problem.\* The concept of the individual in Durkheim is reduced to an unstable state of appetites – an instinct system tending towards disintegration in conditions where the energies are not subordinate to a normative order of a particular kind. His formulation has the distinct merit of stating the problem of the relationship between biological and socio-cultural orders.

A major attempt to relate biological, institutional, and cultural orders has been made with the use of the writings of Freud. Indeed, much work on socialization, on the relation between culture and personality, both in anthropology and sociology, implicitly or explicitly attempts a solution of Durkheim's problem in these terms. However, this approach precludes the study of language and speech. As a result of working with the Freudian theory certain elements within the theory limit interest in linguistic

\* Durkheim tends to leap from types of social integration to the quality of a series of individual acts.

phenomena. The gains of this approach are partly outweighed by the tendency to reduce the social to the psychological by means of a theory of unconscious motivation giving rise to an affective theory of learning. Although the ego in psycho-analytic theory is essentially a linguistically differentiated organization, speech tends to be regarded epi-phenomenally as a process shaped by the patterning of the mechanisms of defence. It is, of course, true that in this theory reality-testing is accomplished essentially through verbal procedures, but the patterning of speech is accorded no independence in this theory nor in the behaviour which the theory illuminates.\* As a result, anthropologists and sociologists who used Freudian theory in their attempts to understand the transformation of the psychic into the social paid little attention to either language or speech, and so carried over into their work the dichotomy between thought and feeling implicit in Freud. Further, the institutional and cultural order are often interpreted in terms of projections of unconscious formations within the individual.

It would seem then that sociologists, because of their emphasis on changes in the major institutional forms in industrial society, have tended to neglect until very recently the study of the transmission of culture. Where this has been attempted, for example in the study of socialization, the influence of Freud has diverted attention from the linguistic environment. The influence of George Mead, who stressed the role of speech in the formation of a distinct social identity, assisted the rise of what has been called interaction theory, but paradoxically not to any special study of the medium of interaction, i.e. speech. The net effect of these movements has been to weaken the possibility of connexion between sociology and linguistics and the cross-fertilization of theories and methods between the two disciplines.

This neglect of the study of language and speech in sociology has certainly not been typical of a school of anthropologists who have firmly and boldly stated a controversial relation between language and the interpretation of reality. William von Humboldt's statement in 1848 that 'man lives with the world about him principally indeed . . . exclusively as language presents it' was echoed by

\* The major interest has been concerned with symbolism. It is important to note work done in the area of schizophrenic thought disorder and the stress on communication emphasized by the existential school.



Boas<sup>2</sup> who claimed that a purely linguistic analysis 'would provide the data for a thorough investigation of the psychology of the peoples of the world'. However, it was with Sapir, a student of Boas, that a new elegance, clarity, subtlety, and originality was introduced into the discussion of the interrelations between language, culture, and personality and which has deeply affected all work in this area. Language, according to Sapir,<sup>3</sup> 'does not as a matter of fact stand apart from or run parallel to direct experience but completely interpenetrates it'. Hoijer<sup>4</sup> succinctly stated Sapir's thesis as follows: Peoples speaking different languages may be said to live in different 'worlds of reality' in the sense that the language they speak affects to a considerable degree both their sensory perceptions and their habitual modes of thought.

Sapir writes:

Language is a guide to 'social reality'. Though language is not ordinarily thought of as of essential interest to the students of social science, it powerfully conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes. . . . It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the real world is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. . . . We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.<sup>5</sup>

Whorf,<sup>6</sup> a student of Sapir, went further and attempted to derive from the morphological syntactic and lexical features of Hopi the 'habitual thought' or 'thought world' of the people. The thought world is 'the microcosm that each man carries about inside himself by which he measures and understands what he can of the macrocosm'. Hoijer<sup>4</sup> one of the major interpreters of Whorf, states that 'the fashions of speaking peculiar to a people, like other aspects of their cultures, are indicative of a view of life, a metaphysics of their culture, compounded of unquestioned and mainly unstated premises which define the nature of the universe and man's position within it'.

This is not the place to follow the many twists and turns of the controversy these writings give rise to, or to examine the empirical

support for the theory, but the reader will find in the bibliography a guide to this literature.<sup>7</sup> This thesis had repercussions for psychology and has been an important factor in bringing about a relationship between linguistics and psychology. One of the many difficulties associated with it is that it focuses upon *universal* features of the formal patterning of language. Although Whorf<sup>6</sup> insists that the influence of language upon habitual thought and behaviour does not

depend so much on *any one system* [e.g. tense or nouns] within the grammar as upon ways of analysing and reporting experience which have become fixed in the language as integrated 'fashions of speaking' which cut across the typical grammatical classifications, so that a 'fashion' may include lexical, morphological, syntactic, and otherwise systematically diverse means coordinated in a certain frame of consistency

these fashions of speaking – the frames of consistency – are not related to an institutional order, nor are they seen as emerging from the structure of social relations. On the contrary, they are seen as determiners of social relations through their role in shaping the culture. In Whorf's later writings, and in the writings of his followers, it is certain morphological and syntactic features of the *language* made psychologically active through the fashion of speaking which elicit habitual and characteristic behaviour in the speakers. In other words, the link between language, culture, and habitual thought is *not* mediated through the social structure.

The view to be taken here is different in that it will be argued that a number of fashions of speaking, frames of consistency, are possible in any given language and that these fashions of speaking, linguistic forms, or codes, are themselves a function of the form social relations take. According to this view, the form of the social relation or – more generally – the social structure generates distinct linguistic forms or codes and *these codes essentially transmit the culture and so constrain behaviour*.

This thesis is different from that of Whorf. It has more in common with some of the writings of Mead, Sapir, Malinowski, and Firth. Whorf's psychology was influenced by the writings of the Gestalt school of psychology, whereas the thesis to be put forward here rests on the work of Vygotsky<sup>8</sup> and Luria.<sup>9</sup> In a sense the



Whorfian theory is more general and more challenging; although, perhaps, it is less open to empirical confirmation, for it asserts that owing to the differential rates of change of culture and language *the latter determines the former*. The thesis to be developed here places the emphasis on changes in the social structure as major factors in shaping or changing a given culture through their effect on the consequences of fashions of speaking. It shares with Whorf the controlling influence on experience ascribed to 'frames of consistency' involved in fashions of speaking. It differs and perhaps relativizes Whorf, by asserting that, in the context of a common language in the sense of a general code, there will arise distinct linguistic forms—fashions of speaking—which induce in the speakers *different* ways of relating to objects and persons. It leaves open the question whether there are features of the *common culture* which all members of a society share which are determined by the specific nature of the general code or language at its *syntactic* and *morphological* levels. It is, finally, more distinctly sociological in its emphasis on the system of social relations.

#### ELABORATED AND RESTRICTED CODES

A general outline of the argument will be given first. This will be followed by a detailed analysis of two linguistic forms or codes and their variants. The discussion will be linked to the problem of educability as this is conceived in industrial societies.

#### *Introduction*

To begin with, a distinction must be made between language and speech. Dell Hymes (1961)<sup>1</sup> writes:

Typically one refers to the act or process of speech, but to the structure, pattern, or system of language. Speech is a message, language is a code. Linguists have been preoccupied with inferring the constants of the language code.

The code which the linguist invents in order to explain speech events is capable of generating  $n$  number of speech codes, and there is no reason for believing that any one language or general code is in this respect better than another, whether it is English or

whether it is Hopi. On this argument language is a set of rules to which all speech codes must comply, but which speech codes are generated is a function of the system of social relations.

The particular form a social relation takes acts selectively on what is said, when it is said, and how it is said. The form of the social relation regulates the options which speakers take up at both syntactic and lexical levels. For example, if an adult is talking to a child he or she will use a speech form in which both the syntax and vocabulary is simple. Put in another way, the consequences of the form the social relation takes are often transmitted in terms of certain syntactic and lexical selections. In as much as a social relation does this, then it may establish for speakers principles of choice, so that a certain syntax and a certain lexical range is chosen rather than another. The specific principles of choice which regulate these selections entail from the point of view of both speaker and listener planning procedures which guide the speaker in the preparation of his speech and which also guide the listener in its reception.

Changes in the form of certain social relations, it is argued, act selectively upon the principles controlling the selection of both syntactic and lexical options. Changes in the form of the social relation affect the planning procedures used in the preparation of speech and the orientation of the listener. The speech used by members of an army combat unit on manoeuvres will be somewhat different from the same members' speech at a padre's evening. Different forms of social relations can generate quite different speech-systems or linguistic codes by affecting the planning procedures. These different speech-systems or codes create for their speakers different orders of relevance and relation. The experience of the speakers may then be transformed by what is made significant or relevant by the different speech-systems. This is a sociological argument, because the speech-system is taken as a consequence of the form of the social relation, or, to put it more generally, is a quality of the social structure.

As the child learns his speech or, in the terms used here, learns specific codes which regulate his verbal acts, he learns the requirements of his social structure. The experience of the child is transformed by the learning which is generated by his own apparently



voluntary acts of speech. The social structure becomes the substratum of his experience essentially through the consequences of the linguistic process. From this point of view, every time the child speaks or listens the social structure of which he is a part is reinforced in him and his social identity is constrained. The social structure becomes the developing child's psychological reality by the shaping of his acts of speech. Underlying the general pattern of his speech are, it is held, critical sets of choices, preferences for some alternatives rather than others, which develop and are stabilized through time and which eventually come to play an important role in the regulation of intellectual, social, and effective orientations.

The same process can be put rather more formally. Individuals come to learn their roles through the process of communication. A role from this point of view is a constellation of shared learned meanings, through which an individual is able to enter into persistent, consistent, and recognized forms of interaction with others. A role is thus a complex coding activity controlling the creation and organization of specific meanings *and* the conditions for their transmission and reception. Now, if it is the case that the communication system which defines a given role behaviourally is essentially that of speech, it should be possible to distinguish critical roles in terms of the speech forms they regulate. The consequences of specific speech forms or codes will transform the environs into a matrix of particular meanings which becomes part of psychic reality through acts of speech. As a person learns to subordinate his behaviour to a linguistic code, which is the expression of the role, different orders of relation are made available to him. The complex of meanings which a role-system transmits reverberates developmentally in an individual to inform his general conduct. On this argument it is the linguistic transformation of the role which is the major bearer of meanings: it is through specific linguistic codes that relevance is created, experience given a particular form, and social identity constrained.

Children who have access to different speech-systems (i.e., learn different roles by virtue of their status position in a given social structure) may adopt quite different social and intellectual procedures despite a common potential.

*Definitions and Brief Description*

Two general types of code can be distinguished: *elaborated* and *restricted*. They can be defined, on a linguistic level, in terms of the probability of predicting for any one speaker which syntactic elements will be used to organize meaning across a representative range of speech. In the case of an elaborated code, the speaker will select from a relatively extensive range of alternatives, and the probability of predicting the organizing elements is considerably reduced. In the case of a restricted code the number of these alternatives is often severely limited and the probability of predicting the elements is greatly increased.

On a psychological level the codes may be distinguished by the extent to which each facilitates (elaborated code) or inhibits (restricted code) an orientation to symbolize intent in a verbally explicit form. Behaviour processed by these codes will, it is proposed, develop different modes of self-regulation and so different forms of orientation. The codes themselves are functions of a particular form of social relationship or, more generally, qualities of social structures.

A distinction will be made between verbal or linguistic, and extra-verbal or para-linguistic components of a communication. The linguistic or verbal component refers to messages where meaning is mediated by words: their selection, combination, and organization. The para-linguistic or extra-verbal component refers to meanings mediated through expressive associations of words (rhythm, stress, pitch, etc.) or through gesture, physical set, and facial modification.

*Restricted Code (lexical prediction).* The pure form of a restricted code would be one where all the words – and hence the organizing structure irrespective of its degree of complexity – are wholly predictable for speakers and listeners. Examples of this pure form would be ritualistic modes of communication: relationships regulated by protocol, types of religious services, cocktail-party routines, some story-telling situations. In these relations individual difference cannot be signalled through the verbal channel except in so far as the *choice* of sequence or



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routine exists. It is transmitted essentially through variations in extra-verbal signals.

Consider the case of a mother telling her child stories which they both know by heart. 'And little Red Riding Hood went into the wood' (ritualistic pause). 'And what do you think happened?' (rhetorical question). If the mother wishes to transmit her discrete experience, her uniqueness, she is unable to do this by varying her words. She can only do it by varying the signals transmitted through extra-verbal channels; through changes in intonation, pitch, speech rhythm, facial set, gesture, or even through changes in muscular tension, if she is holding the child. The code defines the channels through which new information (i.e. learning) can be made available. The discrete intents of mother and child, interpersonal aspects of the relation, can only be transmitted extra-verbally.

Given the selection of the sequence, new information will be made available through the extra-verbal channels, and these channels are likely to become the object of special perceptual activity. The code defines the form of the social relationship by restricting the *verbal* signalling of individual differences. Individuals relate to each other essentially through *the social position or status they are occupying*. Societies differ in terms of the use made of this code and the conditions which elicit it.

It is suggested that where there is an *exchange* of verbal message of maximal predictability, such as social routines, the context will be one where the participants have *low* predictability about each other's individual attributes. The code offers here the possibility of deferred commitment to the relationship. Decisions about its future form will be based upon the significance given to the exchange of extra-verbal messages.

Consider a cocktail party. Two people are introduced who have never met before. A social routine is likely to develop. This establishes mutual predictability and so the basis of a social relation. What is said is impersonal in that the verbal messages are all previously organized. The individuals will be highly sensitive to extra-verbal signals and so these signals are likely to become the object of special perceptual activity. How the social relation will develop initially depends upon the choice of social routine and the

significance accorded to extra-verbal signals. Here, orientation is towards the extra-verbal channels: there is a minimal level of planning involved in the preparation of the speech; the exchange of verbal sequences pre-supposes a shared cultural heritage which controls the verbal communications offered by the occupants of this cocktail-party status.

It is important to note that:

1. The status or positional aspect of the social relationship is important.
2. Orientation is likely to be towards the extra-verbal channels as new information will pass through these channels.
3. Specifically verbal planning is confined to choice of sequence, rather than involving the selection and organization of the sequence.
4. The code restricts the verbal signalling of individual difference.

*Restricted Code (syntactic prediction).* What is more often found is a restricted code, where prediction is only possible at the syntactic level.\* The lexicon will vary from one case to another, but in all cases it is drawn from a narrow range. It is necessary to point out that because a lexicon is drawn from a narrow range this is no criterion for classifying the code as a restricted one. The most general condition for the emergence of this code is a social relationship based upon a common, extensive set of closely-shared identifications and expectations self-consciously held by the members.† It follows that the social relationship will be one of an inclusive kind. The speech is here refracted through a common cultural identity which reduces the need to verbalize intent so that it becomes explicit, with the consequence that the structure of the speech is simplified, and the lexicon will be drawn from a narrow range. The extra-verbal component of the communication will become a major channel for transmitting individual qualifications and so individual difference. The speech will tend to be impersonal in that it will not be specially prepared to fit a given referent. *How*

\* Prediction here refers to an ability of a special observer *not* of the speakers.

† Restricted codes will arise in prisons, combat units of the armed forces, in the peer group of children and adolescents, etc.



things are said, *when* they are said, rather than what is said, becomes important. The intent of the listener is likely to be taken for granted. The meanings are likely to be concrete: descriptive or narrative rather than analytical or abstract. In certain areas meanings will be highly condensed. The speech in these social relations is likely to be fast and fluent, articulatory clues are reduced; some meanings are likely to be dislocated, condensed, and local; there will be a low level of vocabulary and syntactic selections; *the unique meaning of the individual is likely to be implicit.*

Restricted codes are not necessarily linked to social class. They are used by all members of a society at some time. The major function of this code is to define and reinforce the form of the social relationship by restricting the verbal signalling of individual experience.\*

*Elaborated Code (low syntactic prediction).* An elaborated code, where prediction is much less possible at the syntactic level, is likely to arise in a social relationship which raises the tension in its members to select from their linguistic resources a *verbal* arrangement which closely fits specific referents. This situation will arise where the intent of the other person cannot be taken for granted, with the consequence that meanings will have to be expanded and raised to the level of *verbal* explicitness. The verbal planning here, unlike the case of a restricted code, promotes a higher level of syntactic organization and lexical selection. The preparation and delivery of relatively explicit meaning is the major function of this code. This does not mean that these meanings are necessarily abstract, but abstraction inheres in the possibilities. The code will facilitate the *verbal* transmission and elaboration of the individual's unique experience. The condition of the listener, unlike that in the case of a restricted code, will *not* be taken for granted, as the speaker is likely to modify his speech in the light of the special conditions and attributes of the listener. This is not to say that such modifications will always occur, but that this possibility exists. If a restricted code facilitates the construction and exchange of communalized symbols, then an elabor-

\* A restricted code does not necessarily affect the *amount* of speech, only its form.

ated code facilitates the verbal construction and exchange of individualized or personal symbols. An elaborated code, through its regulation, induces in its speakers a sensitivity to the implications of separateness and difference and points to the possibilities inherent in a complex conceptual hierarchy for the organization of experience.

An example at this point is necessary to show how these various codes control social relations. Imagine a man is at a party where he finds a large number of people whom he has never met before. He goes up to a girl. He will then use, initially, a restricted code (lexicon prediction), which will provide the basis for the social relation. He will attempt to improve upon his understanding of her specific attributes by the meaning he gives to her presence and extra-verbal transmissions. He is then likely to move towards an elaborated code (if he possesses one) so that they may both have a means for elaborating verbally their distinctive experience. The possibility of discovering common ground is in this way increased, and the man may then move into a restricted code (syntactic prediction). The quality of the relationship at this point has shifted, and the girl may then regard this as slightly presumptuous and so force the man back to an elaborated code, or, if he is very unfortunate, to a restricted code (lexicon prediction). On the other hand she may accept the change in the social relation. The important points here are that the codes are induced by the social relation, are expressing it, and are regulating it. *The ability to switch codes controls the ability to switch roles.* This is a very simple example but it illustrates all the points made earlier.

#### FORMAL SOCIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF THE TWO CODES

It is possible to state the formal sociological conditions for the emergence of the two codes by distinguishing between the generality of the meanings controlled by the codes and the availability of the speech models from whom they are learned. To the extent that meanings are made explicit and are conventionalized through language, meanings may be called *universalistic*; whilst if they are implicit and relatively less conventionalized through language,



meanings can be called *particularistic*. Similarly, if the speech models are potentially generally available, such models can be called *universalistic*, whilst if the speech models are much less available they can be called *particularistic*.

Using these concepts, a restricted code is *particularistic* with reference to its meaning and so to the social structure which it pre-supposes. However, it is *universalistic* with reference to its models, as such models are generally available. It is important to note here that the concern is with the availability of a *special syntax*. An elaborated code is *universalistic* with reference to its meanings and so to the social structure which it pre-supposes. However, it is likely that the speech models for this code will be *particularistic*. This does not mean that the origin of this code is to be sought in the psychological qualities of the models but that the models are incumbents of specialized social positions located in the system of social stratification. In principle this is not necessary, but it is likely to be empirically the case.

Thus, because a restricted code is *universalistic* with reference to its models, all people have access to its special syntax and to various systems of local condensed meanings; but because an elaborated code is very likely to be *particularistic* with respect to its models, only some people will have access to its syntax and to the *universalistic* character of its meanings. Following this argument, the use of an elaborated code or an orientation to its use will depend *not* on the psychological properties of a speaker but upon access to specialized social positions, by virtue of which a particular type of speech model is made available. Normally, but not inevitably, such social positions will coincide with a stratum seeking or already possessing access to the major decision-making areas of the society.

In terms of learning the codes, the codes are different. The syntax of a restricted code may be learned informally and readily. The greater range of – and selection from – the syntactic alternatives of an elaborated code normally requires a much longer period of formal and informal learning.

These distinctions are useful in isolating the general conditions for a special case of a restricted code (syntactic prediction). This is where the speech model is *particularistic* and the meaning also is *particularistic*. In this situation the individual is wholly constrained by the code. *He has access to no other*. The consequences

of this are thought to be relevant to the problem of educability in developed or emergent industrialized societies. The sociological conditions may be summarized as follows:

*Restricted Code (lexical prediction)*: Ritualistic components of status or positional relationships.

*Restricted Code (high syntactic prediction)*: 1. Model: universalistic; meaning: particularistic. 2. Model: particularistic; meaning: particularistic.

*Elaborated Code (low syntactic prediction)*: Model: particularistic; meaning: universalistic.

#### VERBAL PLANNING, LINGUISTIC CODES, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES

The codes have now been defined, briefly described, and their formal sociological determinants specified. It is necessary to show how these codes may become established on a psychological level and this will be done by looking more closely at the process called verbal planning.

When one person talks to another it is suggested that the following processes at different levels occur in the listener before he is able to produce a sequential reply.

1. *Orientation*: the listener first scans the communication for a pattern of dominant signals. Not all the words and extra-verbal signals will carry the same value; some will carry greater significance than others for the listener.

2. *Selection*: There will be associations to the patterns of dominant signals which will control the selections the listener makes from his potential stock of words, sequences, and extra-verbal signals.

3. *Organization*: The listener will then have to fit the selected words and sequences into a grammatical frame and integrate them with the extra-verbal signals.

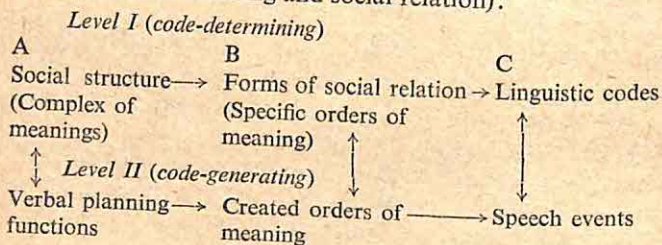
On a psychological level codes are generated by specific kinds of verbal planning. It follows that restricted and elaborated codes will establish different kinds of regulation which crystallize in the nature of verbal planning. The originating determinant of the kind of orientation, selection, and organization, is the form of the social



relation or, more generally, it is a quality of the social structure. The codes, linguistic translations of the meanings of the social structure, are nothing more than verbal planning activities at the psychological level and *only at this level can they be said to exist*.

The consequences of the form of the social relationship are transmitted and sustained by codes which at the individual level consist of verbal planning processes. Particular orders of relationship to objects and persons inhere in linguistic codes. These orders of relation are then spontaneously generated by the individual as the verbal planning processes become stabilized. Following this argument, changes in the social structure, in the organization of forms of social relation, modify speech systems or linguistic codes. These in turn, by virtue of verbal planning procedures, change the order of significance which individuals spontaneously create as a consequence of their acts of speech and which in their creation transform them. Clearly not all aspects of social structure are translated into elements of the linguistic code, but it is considered that the major aspects are so translated.

The following diagram\* might be helpful in distinguishing the level of analysis (the arrows indicate reciprocal influence as it is possible for a verbal planning function to develop which creates novel orders of meaning and social relation):



#### SOME IMPLICATIONS OF RESTRICTED† AND ELABORATED CODES

An elaborated code generated originally by the form of the social relation becomes a facility for transmitting individuated verbal

\* I am grateful to Miss J. Cook, Sociological Research Unit, University of London Institute of Education, for her help in this formulation.

† The reference here and throughout is to a restricted code (high syntactic prediction).

responses. As far as any one speaker is concerned, he is not aware of a speech-system or code, but the planning procedures which he is using both in the preparation of his speech and in the receiving of speech creates one. These planning procedures promote a relatively higher level of syntactic organization and lexical selection than does a restricted code. What is then made available for learning, by an elaborated code, is of a different order from that made available in the case of a restricted code. The learning generated by these speech systems is quite different. By learning, the reference is to what is significant, what is made relevant: socially, intellectually, and emotionally. From a developmental perspective, an elaborated code user comes to perceive language as a set of theoretical possibilities available for the transmission of unique experience. The concept of self, unlike the concept of self of a speaker limited to a restricted code, will be verbally differentiated, so that it becomes in itself the object of special perceptual activity. In the case of a speaker limited to a restricted code, the concept of self will tend to be refracted through the implications of the status arrangements. Here there is no problem of self, *because the problem is not relevant.*

As a child learns an elaborated code he learns to scan a particular syntax, to receive and transmit a particular pattern of meaning, to develop a particular verbal planning process, and very early *learns to orient towards the verbal channel.* He learns to manage the role requirements necessary for the effective production of the code. He becomes aware of a certain order of relationships (intellectual, social, and emotional) in his environment, and his experience is transformed by these relations. As the code becomes established through its planning procedures, the developing child voluntarily, through his acts of speech, generates these relations. He comes to perceive language as a set of theoretical possibilities for the presentation of his discrete experience to others. An elaborated code, through its regulation, induces developmentally in its speakers an expectation of separateness and difference from others. It points to the possibilities inherent in a complex conceptual hierarchy for the organization of experience.

It is possible to distinguish two modes of an elaborated code. One mode facilitates the verbal elaboration of *inter-personal*



*relations*, and the second facilitates the verbal elaboration of relations between *objects*. These two modes of an elaborated code would differentiate different ranges of experience and would presuppose learning to manage different role relations. The two modes possess the general features of an elaborated code. They both carry low syntactic prediction; they both serve as facilities for the verbal elaboration of discrete intent; they orient their users to the expectation of difference; they point to logically similar conceptual orders: *but the referents of the relationships are different*.

An individual going into the arts is likely to possess an elaborated code oriented to the person; whilst an individual going into the sciences, particularly the applied sciences, is likely to possess an elaborated code oriented to object relations. C. P. Snow's two cultures may be related to the experiences differentiated through these two modes of an elaborated code. To be able to switch from one mode to the other may involve a recognition of, and an ability to translate verbally, different orders of experience. It may also involve a *recognition* of and an *ability to manage* the different types of role relations which these modes of speech promote. Over and above genetic dispositions towards person or object relations, it may well be that certain kinds of family settings and schools can orient the child towards, and stabilize, the use of one or both of these two modes of an elaborated code. It is possible for an individual to be limited to an elaborated code and to the role relations of either of its two modes, or to possess both modes, or to possess all forms of elaborated and restricted codes. These alternatives may be subject to considerable environmental influence.

A child *limited* to a restricted code will tend to develop essentially through the regulation inherent in the code. For such a child, speech does not become the object of special perceptual activity, neither does a theoretical attitude develop towards the structural possibilities of sentence organization. The speech is epitomized by a low-level and limiting syntactic organization and there is little motivation or orientation towards increasing vocabulary.

There is a limited and often rigid use of qualifiers (adjectives, adverbs, etc.) and these function as social counters through which individual intent is transmitted. This dramatically reduces the

verbal elaboration of intent which, instead, tends to be given meaning through extra-verbal means. Words and speech sequences refer to broad classes of contents rather than to progressive differentiation within a class. The reverse of this is also possible; a range of items within a class may be listed without knowledge of the concept which summarizes the class. The categories referred to tend not to be broken down systematically. This has critical implications if the reference is a subjective state of the speaker. Although the speech possesses a warmth and vitality, it tends to be impersonal in the literal sense of that word. The original social relation between mother and child exerted little pressure on the child to make his experience relatively explicit in a verbally differentiated way. Speech is not perceived as a major means of presenting to the other inner states. The type of learning, the conditions of learning, and the dimensions of relevance initiated and sustained through a restricted code are radically different from learning induced through an elaborated code.

The rigid range of syntactic possibilities leads to difficulty in conveying linguistically logical sequence and stress. The verbal planning function is shortened, and this often creates in sustained speech sequences a large measure of dislocation or disjunction. The thoughts are often strung together like beads on a frame rather than following a planned sequence. A restriction in planning often creates a high degree of redundancy. This means that there may well be a great deal of repetition of information, through sequences which add little to what has already been given. The following passages may illustrate these points:

It's all according like these youths and that if they get into these gangs and that they most have a bit of a lark around and say it goes wrong and that and they probably knock someone off I mean think they just do it to be big getting publicity here and there.

Boy, age 16. I.Q. verbal 104, non-verbal 100.

Well it should do but it don't seem to nowadays, like there's still murders going on now, any minute now or something like that they get people don't care they might get away with it then they all try it and it might leak out one might tell his mates that he's killed someone it might leak out like it might get around he gets hung for it like that.

Boy, age 17. I.Q. verbal 99, non-verbal 126.



Role relations may be limited and code switching may be hampered by the regulative consequences of a restricted code. An individual limited to a restricted code will tend to mediate an elaborated code through the regulation of his own.

The structure and function of the speech of children and adults limited to a restricted code is of the *same general order* as the speech induced by social relations generating a restricted code outlined earlier. Some children have access to no other code; their only code is a restricted one. Clearly one code is not better than another; each possesses its own aesthetic, its own possibilities. Society, however, may place different values on the orders of experience elicited, maintained, and progressively strengthened through the different coding systems.

The orientation towards these codes, elaborated and restricted, may be independent of the psychology of the child, independent of his native ability, although the *level* at which a code is used will undoubtedly reflect purely psychological attributes. The orientation towards these codes may be governed entirely by the form of the social relation, or more generally by the quality of the social structure. The intellectual and social procedures by which individuals relate themselves to their environment may be very much a question of their speech models within the family and the codes these speech models use.

I should like to draw attention to the relations between social class and the two coding systems. The sub-cultural implications of social class give rise to different socialization procedures. The different normative systems create different family-role systems operating with different modes of social control.<sup>10</sup> It is considered that the normative systems associated with the middle class and associated strata are likely to give rise to the modes of an elaborated code whilst those associated with some sections of the working class are likely to create individuals limited to a restricted code.<sup>11</sup> Clearly social class is an extremely crude index for the codes and more specific conditions for their emergence have been given in this paper. Variations in behaviour found within groups who fall within a particular class (defined in terms of occupation and education) within a mobile society are often very great. It is possible to locate the two codes and their modes more precisely by

considering the orientation of the family-role system, the mode of social control, and the resultant linguistic relations.<sup>12</sup> Variations in the orientation of the family-role system can be linked to the external social network of the family and to occupational roles. It is not possible to do more than mention the possibilities of these more sensitive indices.

Children socialized within middle-class and associated strata can be expected to possess both an elaborated *and* a restricted code, whilst children socialized within some sections of the working-class strata, particularly the lower working-class, can be expected to be *limited* to a restricted code. If a child is to succeed as he progresses through school it becomes critical for him to possess, or at least to be oriented towards, an elaborated code.

The relative backwardness of lower-working-class children may well be a form of culturally induced backwardness transmitted to the child through the implications of the linguistic process. The code the child brings to the school symbolizes his social identity. It relates him to his kin and to his local social relations. The code orients the child progressively towards a pattern of relationships which constitute for the child his psychological reality and this reality is reinforced every time he speaks.

## CONCLUSION

Two general linguistic codes or speech-systems have been discussed, their social origins explored, and their regulative consequences briefly discussed. It is thought that the theory might throw some light on the social determinants of educability. Where a child is sensitive to an elaborated code the school experience for such a child is one of symbolic and social development; for the child limited to a restricted code the school experience is one of symbolic and social change. It is important to realize that a restricted code carries its own aesthetic. It will tend to develop a metaphoric range of considerable power, a simplicity and directness, a vitality and rhythm; it should not be devalued. Psychologically, it unites the speaker to his kin and to his local community. A change of code involves changes in the *means* whereby social identity and reality are created. This argument means that



educational institutions in a fluid society carry within themselves alienating tendencies. To say this is *not* to argue for the preservation of a pseudo-folk culture but rather to argue for certain changes in the social structure of educational institutions; it is also to argue for increased sensitivity on the part of teachers towards both the cultural and cognitive requirements of the formal educational relationship. The problem goes deeper than this. It raises the question of a society which measures human worth, accords respect, grants significance by means of a scale of purely occupational achievement.

From a more academic point of view it is tentatively thought that the thesis might well have a more general application. Elaborated and restricted codes and their variants should be found in any society where their originating conditions exist. The definitions should, in principle, be capable of application to a wide range of languages (and to other symbolic forms, e.g. music), although in any one case elaboration and restriction will be relative. The theory might be seen as a part, but clearly not the whole, of the answer to the problem of how the psychic is transformed into the social. The theory is sociological and is limited by the nature of these assumptions. Individual differences in the use of a particular code cannot be dealt with except on an insensitive more-or-less basis. It is also clear that there is more to culture and communication than what might be revealed by a consideration of limited aspects of speech. Finally, it is thought imperative that sociologists recognize in their analyses the fact that man speaks.

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## Towards Eliminating the Concept of Secularization

*David Martin*

This is a work of 'demolition'. I propose to consider the uses to which the term 'secularization' has been put, and to show that those uses (or perhaps, more accurately, misuses) are a barrier to progress in the sociology of religion. I shall explore the distinction between the 'religious' and the 'secular' – notably the line of distinction most often employed, that between 'this worldliness' and 'other worldliness'. I will then consider the conventional criterion of secularization in terms of the decline of institutions labelled 'religious'. I will go on to argue that secularization is less a scientific concept than a tool of counter-religious ideologies. Such ideologies select certain phenomena as *really* 'religious', for the purposes of their own practical politics and according to the logic of their metaphysical systems, and then for similar reasons utilize the notion of inevitability to symbolize their own triumph over such recalcitrant phenomena. I have chosen three of these ideologies for particular consideration: rationalism, Marxism, and existentialism.

Such a task of demolition may, to some, appear unnecessary labour. For them matters are perfectly clear as they stand. Whether one likes it or not, it will be said, religion is on the way out, and this simply means that churches, chapels, synagogues, and temples are playing a progressively less important role in social life. Indeed, so obvious is this process that it hardly requires serious sociological attention. It presents a phenomenon so universal and inevitable that there may be time left to deal with it. Perhaps the only use of an interest in secularization is the provision of an index of social advance. Where religion is weak one has a sure indicator of a developed society firmly oriented towards the future. The proponents of this view see no great harm in admitting that



this is not quite the case in the United States of America. Whether or not reports of positive revival there are exaggerated it can be agreed that churches, chapels, to some extent synagogues, and – latterly – mosques are flourishing institutions. It may be that this is because, in terms of its social arrangements, the United States is a case of arrested development, whose evolution has been delayed at the late-nineteenth-century stage. It may also be that the American system of education is to blame, since, in spite of an admirable refusal to allow denominational teaching, it is widely regarded as somewhat superficial. But whatever may be the factors lying behind the swollen finances of religious bodies, every instructed person knows that the situation is only *apparently* favourable to religion in the *proper sense of the word*. Once American piety is closely examined there emerges a growth of profoundly secular motives, such as quasi-sacred validations of the American way of life or the provision of an ethnic focus of identification for third-generation immigrants lost in the melting pot. One may confidently anticipate that once education has made sufficient progress in America or once dormant class consciousness has been awakened, then the anodyne of bogus religion will cease to exercise any influence.

Those who argue on such lines are, I would suggest, conceptually confused. They oscillate between (a) a definition of religion roughly according to conventional usage – in terms of institutions, like churches and chapels and (b) an acceptance that there is an analytic criterion for differentiating the real or genuine element in religion from the bogus. My aim is briefly to explore this confident and largely unexamined confusion.

Let us, therefore, first look at the analytic distinction between 'religious' and 'secular' which employs the contrast between this and other worldliness. (Obviously, it is not the only contrast available. One could just as easily have examined distinctions between metaphysical and positive, mythopoeic and factual, miraculous and lawful, conditional and ineluctable, and so on.) To do so is to indicate something of the range of criteria which are in fact available and which underlie its apparent simplicity. That done, it will be possible to inquire whether a single criterion is

capable of being employed as a basis for analysis, or whether groups of criteria can be linked together.

Let us begin by considering a familiar approach to the meaning and function of 'other worldliness'. According to this line of thought other worldliness refers to a belief in life after death which serves to render life here and now more tolerable. However, as circumstances improve, it becomes less sensible to concentrate on the prospect of deferred benefits and natural to allow the concerns of this world to grow progressively more dominant. The mere fact that the original belief in a world to come made its impact on the present life does not alter the case in any important way. So much for one type of interpretation.

It can be contrasted with another equally familiar understanding of what is meant by 'other worldliness'. According to this approach the representative figure is the hobo or fakir, who is only interested in an intrinsically worth-while state of being (or non-being), which he achieves within the world as now constituted either by the discovery of the true self or by the immolation of self. The material benefits of the present world are rejected, in company with the deferred benefits of a life to come.

Thus, we have set out, in crude terms, two differing approaches to other worldliness, one of which maintains a contrast between present and to come, while the other emphasizes the contrast between spiritual and material. Both interpretations of other worldliness are legitimate and are far from being mutually exclusive. For example, the concept of a life to come might be couched either in the form of an intrinsically worth-while state or in the form of gross materiality. Alternatively, the progress towards an intrinsically worth-while state might be conceived either solely in terms of the present world or in terms of several lives to come. Nor would belief in a world hereafter prevent proper and successful attention to events here and now. A Texan Baptist millionaire for example would not necessarily fix his eye singly and solely on the appropriation of deferred benefits.

Certain of the types just mentioned may be usefully compared to a third type. A dedicated communist would resemble the Baptist millionaire in that he believed in deferred benefits, but would differ in his estimate of the current material advantages presented by



capitalist civilization. To that extent his horizon is dominated by the life of a world to come. On the other hand, he would refuse to believe that there exists anywhere else than here, and would also hold that when the day dawns for a material revolution it will bring a spiritual one as well.

The other world can also be conceived as an eternally present and perfect original of which the corrupted material world is but a copy. Or again, materialism may be opposed to spirituality in terms of philosophical doctrines as to what is ultimately real. In the theological context materialism is distinguishable from spirituality in terms of degrees of confidence towards 'the world', in that, for example, it may be regarded as evil, as good, as potentially good, or as neutral.

Thus, even a short survey of the apparently simple distinction between this and other worldliness discloses something of the range of criteria available. It may be confidently anticipated that parallel complications arise in relation to the other contrasts referred to above: between mythopoeic and factual, conditional and ineluctable, and so on. Broadly, there are two ways of dealing with the difficulties posed by the existence of such variety. Either one can attempt to *link* the polar extremes of the various continua in such a way that one set of poles defines religion while the other set defines secularity. Or one can *select* one dichotomy as furnishing the crucial contrast between the religious and the secular.

As regards the first alternative, it is fairly clear that no exclusive association exists in logic or in practice between any one pole and any grouping of the others. Naturally, the logic of taking up one position has some sort of implication as regards the other dimensions indicated, and this logic may, to a certain extent, be evident in practice. A rejection of the world as evil, for example, is not likely to be associated with a preference for material advantage rather than the cultivation of an intrinsically worth-while spiritual condition. But there are always some degrees of freedom, and 'logic' can imply several different alternatives without any of these being markedly lacking in internal coherence.

It follows inevitably that, if there are no exclusive associations between one polar alternative and any related set of alternatives, no sets of criteria can be utilized to distinguish between the re-

ligious and the secular. There would be an obvious absurdity in combining the metaphysical and mythopoeic modes of thought, the acceptance of miracle, belief in historical purpose, rejection of material benefits, and lack of confidence towards the world under the common rubric of religion. The mythopoeic, for example, includes non-religious poetry, while some religions have no myths. Again, metaphysical doctrines are often specifically anti-religious.

Nor is the position improved if criteria are aligned in groups along a time sequence, e.g. the miraculous and the mythopoeic developing into the metaphysical and lawful, followed by the positive and factual. Any attempt to, say, restrict religion to a mythopoeic and miraculous phase is simply historical nonsense. Certain other forms of nonsense in relation to the concept of phases must be left to the final section.

The second possibility is to select one dichotomy as crucial. Unfortunately this is a very 'expensive' way of solving the problem. It is expensive because it leads to unintelligibility. For example, an analytic definition which identified the secular in terms of an acceptance of power and wealth would require the growth of the Christian Church and its subsequent dominance to be taken as illustrating a process of successful secularization. Again, an analytic definition which identified religion with a concern for 'another' more perfect world, would require the empirical institutions of Catholicism and Puritanism to be analytically sliced apart into religious and secular elements, with the latter probably dominant. Of course, studies based on such definitions would be perfectly viable, but to identify them with an inquiry into the fortunes of religion is to render intelligible exposition impossible. Whatever continuum is proposed as crucial, too many acknowledged forms of religious experience will be at every point along it. In other words, analytic definitions should not constitute so gross a violation of conventional usage as to arouse constant misunderstanding. This juncture in the argument facilitates a transition to a consideration of what an acceptance of conventional usage offers for the solution of our problem.

The conventional definition of religion implies a study of the social role played by any institutions of which the term 'religious' is usually predicated. This study would presumably be concerned



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*Penguin Classics*  
*...the investigation of belief and practice in a society where inflexible  
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...culture deeply impregnated with Catholic  
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...cultures are almost incapable of secularization in Protestant  
terms (since those who do not attend can regard themselves as  
better Christians than those who do), then that is one way of  
viewing the situation. There remain others, e.g. the Catholic. Thus  
the investigator can simply utilize the various definitions currently  
used in our society or language for operational purposes, i.e. as  
suggesting types of indices in relation to certain social phenomena.  
However, this acceptance of conventional usage in respect of  
religion requires that 'secularization' be employed in ways rather  
far removed from its normal connotation, in so far as the word is  
employed at all outside a technical context. Normally, seculariza-  
tion is *not* used to indicate the decline of an institution in this or

that respect, but the decline of religious institutions considered as a class. It may be that this is an *unfortunate* usage, in that it assumes religious institutions to have common characteristics apart from the sharing of an adjective. But if it is, then the word 'secularization' might just as well be dropped, since the essence of its normal meaning turns precisely on this assumption that religious groups undergo a common process because they share certain common denominators.

There are thus two possibilities: either 'secularization' is a word affixed like a label to any decline in relation to this case or that case, or it refers to similar processes in relation to institutions having at least some common characteristics. If the former possibility is chosen, then it would be better to simply employ the word 'decline', since any use of 'secularization' reverberates with embarrassing echoes of its wider connotation. If the latter possibility is chosen then it becomes necessary to indicate the common characteristics in connexion with which secularization takes place. In other words, the only useful employment of the concept of secularization requires that religion is designated in terms of particular modes of thinking and acting rather than in terms derived from usage. Thus, having been forced away from a definition in terms of certain characteristics towards a definition based on usage, the examination of usage forces one back towards precisely the sort of definition originally rejected.

The kind of nonsense underlying the 'case by case' use of secularization can be illustrated from the religious situation obtaining in the Roman Empire. Let us suppose that in relatively sophisticated social strata people variously maintain the old beliefs, adopt a modern scepticism, elaborate a religious philosophy like stoicism, participate in mystery cults, display increasing concern about astrology, and are converted to Christianity. In terms of the decline of the ancient beliefs and rites, these are all examples of secularization, so that scepticism and Christianity are equally examples of the same phenomenon. On the other hand, if one is to differentiate between secularization and conversion to another religion one can only do so on the basis of an analytic criterion. Obviously, the same difficulties arise in the study of the contemporary situation.

It is not simply perversity that prompts the critical attitude



with the investigation of such institutions with regard to all the relevant parameters of belief and practice. In cases where influence was observed to wane the change would count as an example of secularization.

Admittedly this is a very Catholic definition of religion in that it lays stress on membership of (or relation to) an institution. However, the Catholic bias only underlines the value of utilizing convention, since we live in a culture deeply impregnated with Catholic values and our usage reflects our religious history. The institutional identification would not apply, say, in Ancient Greece, but that again indicates the advantage of accepting usage as a guide, since it would obviously be nonsensical to define religion in any other terms than those used by the Greeks themselves. The only difficulty is that of showing that a certain Greek term or set of terms runs parallel to the term 'religion' in our own language.

Nevertheless to agree to accept 'convention' does not remove all the difficulties. Not only have we a Catholic heritage but also a Protestant one, and the Protestant definition of religion is used alongside the Catholic. Moreover, the Protestant definition of religion does not involve one convention but several. This again is what you might expect in a Protestant *milieu*, where individualism is highly valued. However, perhaps this need not worry the empirical investigator too much. He can utilize Catholic and Protestant criteria, as it were, without prejudice, since he is not concerned with whether a phenomenon is 'really' religious, but only with identifying units of discussion. If the result is that Protestant cultures are almost incapable of secularization in Protestant terms (since those who do not attend can regard themselves as better Christians than those who do), then that is one way of viewing the situation. There remain others, e.g. the Catholic. Thus the investigator can simply utilize the various definitions currently used in our society or language for operational purposes, i.e. as suggesting types of indices in relation to certain social phenomena.

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thus far adopted towards either analytic or conventional definitions of religion and secularization. The argument so far is intended to clarify some wider issues which must now – however briefly – be indicated. The most important point which I would urge is that there is no unitary process called ‘secularization’ arising in reaction to a set of characteristics labelled ‘religious’. It can be shown that religious institutions bear no such common characteristics. As regards the arbitrary criterion which identifies the ‘really’ religious elements in certain institutions it is just possible that certain common processes occur in relation to these (e.g. the degree of dominance accorded to other worldly concerns), but the institutions themselves flourish or decline in response to a whole complex of causes not necessarily connected with these ‘common processes’ at all. The reasons vary within the same religion according to the culture and its historical background, and vary as between different versions of religious belief according to their situation.

All institutions expand and decline for a wide variety of reasons, and religious institutions are no exception. For example, the contemporary decline in religious institutions may be part of the general *malaise* which is offsetting every kind of social institution in a time of rapid social change.

Since there is no unitary process of secularization one cannot talk in a unitary way about the causes of secularization. The whole concept appears as a tool of counter-religious ideologies which identify the ‘real’ element in religion for polemical purposes and then arbitrarily relate it to the notion of a unitary and irreversible process, partly for the aesthetic satisfactions found in such notions and partly as a psychological boost to the movements with which they are associated. Once this framework is set up the evidence can either be accommodated to it, or, if not ‘naturally’ forthcoming, can be ‘artificially’ induced by persecution or manipulation of the educational process. One is aware of course that a use of the words ‘artificial’ and ‘natural’ corresponds precisely to pejorative usages adopted by the counter-religious ideologies in question. One man’s artificial situation is another man’s natural process. One man’s manipulation of power is another man’s system of education.

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We conclude with the briefest examination of the ideologies which utilize the concept of secularization. The most important comprise optimistic rationalism, Marxism, and existentialism. The ideology of psychoanalysis might also have been included, but as its usual weaknesses (such as the technique of exorcism by terminological inflation) are specially evident in its analyses of religion there are good reasons for omitting it. No one will doubt that each of the ideologies concerned is coherent within its own terms or that they provide fruitful sources of hypotheses about religious behaviour. They initiate many of the questions which require investigation.

Before touching on each of these three systems of thought in turn some points need to be made about the common element of unilateralism or irreversibility. The concept of irreversibility admits several interpretations. There is, for instance, the sense in which industrialization is inevitable and irreversible. Whether or not it was inevitable in the seventeenth century, one cannot now conceive any circumstances, short of a last holocaust, which could reverse it. This kind of prediction is based on a sober assessment of all the relevant information and shows that the preconditions of industrialization are present and will continue to be so.

There is a complete difference between this type of concept and the notion of an overriding fate which informs all events with an ineluctable cosmic purpose, whether that purpose be the Second Advent, the continuity of progress, or some cyclic notion of rise and fall. A major aspect of this difference turns on the fact that doctrines of cosmic purpose never use evidence in its own right but employ it purely in an illustrative capacity.

Between these two extremes lie metaphysical systems (or, in the case of existentialism, an anti-metaphysical 'system'), which provide frameworks into which the isolated 'bricks' of evidence can be fitted. The framework is based on the selection of certain aspects of the situation as 'real' and it dramatizes these as a basis for prediction. Although evidence is not used in a purely illustrative manner, the scaffolding ensures that it can never falsify basic presuppositions. It is this last version of inevitability with which we are largely concerned.

The spokesmen for optimistic rationalism begin their analysis on the premiss that religion is not true, i.e. it has historically



involved beliefs which can be shown to be incorrect, or historical assertions of doubtful validity, or statements which by nature cannot be proved or falsified. They then proceed to argue that religion maintains itself because this bankruptcy is inadequately publicized: the Church obstructs enlightenment and tries to manipulate education. Once educate people properly, in the neutral scientific atmosphere congenial to rational values, and religion will steadily lose its grip and mankind no longer be troubled by bad dreams.

Rationalists then go on to observe that in many areas religion is undergoing a crisis and they therefore 'fit' this evidence into the pre-established scheme. The troubles of religious institutions are an inevitable prelude to the triumph of truth. Truth is not only truth but it will be manifest in the demise of religion.

As has often been pointed out, this analysis lays far too great stress on religion as a system of explanation and on man as a cognitive animal. Believers are not failed rationalists but human beings. Faith provides relatively little information about the world, and such as it does provide is incidental. The elements of information are not only subordinate but probably exercise little influence so far as men's religious commitments are concerned. Running parallel to this misunderstanding of religion lies a misunderstanding of social development. There is no steady progress towards a situation in which value systems gradually approximate to the neutral and indisputable deliverances of objective reason. It is true that certain classes of ideas do experience continuous winnowing, so that taboos regarding birth control, for instance, may eventually be eroded by a combination of evidence and argument. But the ideological systems on which societies rest depend upon the constant production of distortions, upon incoherence and downright false images of how the social system operates. One has only to consider the productions either of an American party convention, a meeting of the Supreme Soviet, or of our own Parliament, to recognize the inescapable role of nonsense and lies as a basis for social actions. The situations which require such outpourings are inherent in social activity, not the unfortunate consequences of a particular period or social system.

It follows that if lies, nonsense, distortion, and plain blindness

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to the social reality are required by social cohesion (given the nature of man), then the chances for religion, whether 'true' or 'untrue', are excellent. Religion will always be bound up with this nonsense (the pronouncements of judges, politicians, bishops, and other ideological representatives of society). Yet at the same time it presents a mythical framework which is more than the nonsense to which it is indissolubly wedded, since it can set all the major and minor events of life within a profoundly coherent framework of meaning. In other words, it unites myth in the sense of partial misrepresentation to myth in the sense of a framework of understanding, a perspective, a poetic and dramatized symbolic system. Society requires myth in both these senses, and it is this requirement which the rationalist theory of secularization ignores. One is not, of course, saying that religion is only a profound form of poetry centring around the basic axes of the human situation, but merely that this is a minimum assessment of its significance.

The Marxist version of inevitability does not regard the triumph of truth as the triumph of an idea, but as the victory of reason embodied in a historical movement. It reattaches the Hegelian notion of the state as 'the march of God in history' to the *élite* segment of the working class, and then reassimilates the concept of the working class to the state once the revolution is completed. Thus, 'God', as set over against the movement of history, or the actuality of the communist state, is forced into retirement as an unnecessary disturbance of a logical circle. He is doubly unnecessary as man progressively proceeds to dominate his physical and social environment rather than be dominated by it.

Again, this analysis involves a definition of religion as partial and inadequate as that provided by rationalism. Moreover, whereas rationalism still awaits the triumph of reason and science, Marxism commits itself to identifying this triumph in already existing societies. (This is analogous to the Christian who converts the coming of Christ into the establishment of the Church.) Nobody disputes that the Marxist definition of religion depicts the *function* of certain modes of religious feeling and belief encouraged by the churches at various historical periods. Where there is class domination, religion may be expected to give expression to it,



either explicitly in a social philosophy or implicitly in the 'images' it throws up. But it is only one element in the range of religious feeling, and in any case the automatic reference back of images to the class situation involves an extremely dangerous fondness for presenting analogies as one-way causal connexions.

Not merely is the definition inadequate. Even if the universal arrival of the communist state were historically inevitable (which is the first requisite of the Marxist theory of secularization), it does not follow that the kind of domination generating religious reactions will automatically cease. Class domination is not the only form of domination. On the other hand, even if communist states are based on the kind of domination of man by man with which its opponents credit it, it does not follow that a religious revival would result. Domination might be so all-embracing as to attenuate religious practices to a very great degree. Once this had been achieved the facts of declining participation in religious institutions could be 'fitted in' to the Marxist theory by the ideologues of the communist state. The process of 'fitting in' is of universal application, and, should any fact prove recalcitrant, recourse can be had to concepts of 'artificial retardation' as contrasted with the 'real situation'.

The final version of inevitability is that of existentialism. In this case there is a less overriding motive to project the presuppositions of the ideology on to the historical process. Since existentialism has a psychology rather than a sociology, one can hardly expect a major concern with unilateral historical trends. Moreover, since there is an emphasis on subjectivity one may assume that such historical generalizations as do exist will be more visibly simple reflections of a standpoint than conclusions carefully drawn from prolonged study.

Some of the most interesting statements about secularization have come from religious rather than atheistic existentialists and it is the position of these which is now to be briefly outlined. It goes without saying that there are many varieties of religious existentialism, from the moderate conservatism of an Anglican bishop to the subjectivist mysticism of the radicals.

The radicals tend to reject 'religion' by comparison with the

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gospel. Religion is a complex of institutions built around an idol 'God', who is falsely regarded as an existence alongside other existences. The proper use for the word 'God' is to refer the qualitative aspect of all existence. Religion obscures Him in forms and formulae, ritualizes Him sacramentally, when in truth, He can only be known experimentally and experientially. Only thus can he become true for the individual person. Bound up with false religion is morality, understood as a body of rules rather than as genuine personal responses to the uniquely situational character of moral choice. Both false religion and morality are the supposed preserve of the clergy who contrive to maintain a role for themselves into an era where it is irrelevant – by battenning on what remains of man's immaturity and insecurity. However, some men have 'come of age' and even if these are still a minority there is nothing to be gained by stacking our cards with those who are behind. That is why the gospel remains relevant but the institutional Church is superannuated.

The existentialist movement expresses an ageless tension between the experiential and the formalized, the objective and the personal, the individual and the institutional. The misunderstanding occurs in that this tension arises alongside the patent difficulties of certain religious institutions, and is projected on to the situation as if it were an explanation. Since the existentialists are deeply opposed to institutionalization anyway, there is a further pressure on them to present this explanation as if it were a continuing and irreversible trend. Just as in the case of Marxism and rationalism the facts are convenient illustrations of the ideological scheme, so in existentialism the facts illustrate the rejection of schemes and ideologies.

Some insights are correct: none of the positions outlined are simple mistakes. For example the existentialists rightly point out that the 'God of the gaps', *deus ex machina*, has increasingly few gaps to fill. He is less frequently required to fill in a bit part where man's technical achievement leaves off. But to talk in terms of man 'come of age' as if this were a sociological generalization accounting for institutional decay is as absurd as the rationalist explanation in terms of intellectual development.



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To sum up: the vastly varied religious situation needs to be studied apart from the pressure to illustrate a philosophical position. Values doubtless intrude into every sociological formulation, but the more egregious versions of ideological distortion can be avoided. The word secularization is too closely linked to such distortions to be retained. Its very use encourages us to avoid studies of the impact of, for example, geographic and social mobility on religious practice, in favour of cloudy generalizations. *Secularization* should be erased from the sociological dictionary.

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Basil Bernstein

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